al-Ghazzali

Alchemy of Happiness

(*Kimiyā al-saᶜadat*)

Ḥujat al-Islām Abū Ḥāmid
Muḥammad Ghazzali Ṭūsī
VOLUME 2

TRANSLATED BY
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INTRODUCTION BY
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In *The Alchemy of Happiness* Ghazzali aims to guide man towards that state of Divine love and acceptance what he calls "spiritual happiness." Along the way there are many pitfalls, traps, and distracting temptations—internal and external—lying in wait for the careless traveler; but there are also defenders, guides, and helpers which he may enlist in his aid. *The Alchemy of Happiness* is nothing less than a critique and a manual, a detailed guidebook, to assist the traveler's progress to a happy conclusion. If successful, he passes safely through the awesome pageant of the Resurrection to achieve one of the degrees of bliss, the highest of which—vouchsafed only to the few—being that state where there remains neither fear of the terrors of hell nor appetite for the pleasures of Paradise. It is the pure ecstasy of the contemplation of the loving Divine Presence: absolute spiritual happiness

Jay R. Crook (Muhammad Nur) spent most of his working life in the Middle East, especially in Iran and Saudi Arabia. Hired by the Peace Corps as a field representative, he finished in 1971 as Deputy Director in the Iran program. He then enrolled in the Doctoral Program of Persian Literature for Foreigners at Tehran University and received his Ph.D. in 1978.

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In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

The Alchemy of Happiness

(Kīmiyā-yi Saᶜādat)

BY

Ḥujjat al-Islām
Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī Ṭūsī
(AH450-505/1058-1111CE)

Volume II

Translated from the Persian by
Jay R. Crook (Md. Nur), Ph.D.

Introduction by
Laleh Bakhtiar, Ph.D.

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Seyyed Hossein Nasr

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The cypress tree bending with the wind, the source for the paisley design, is a symbol of the perfect Muslim, who, as the tree, bends with the wind of God's Will.

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THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

BY IMAM GHAZZALI

[*In the name of God, the Merciful the Compassionate*][1025]

THE THIRD PILLAR:

CONCERNING THE DESTROYERS

In this Pillar, there are also ten chapters:

THE FIRST CHAPTER: The Discovery of the Discipline of the Self

THE SECOND CHAPTER: The Treatment of the Appetites of the Stomach and the Genitalia

THE THIRD CHAPTER: The Treatment of the Greed for Words and the Detriments of the Tongue

THE FOURTH CHAPTER: The Treatment of the Sickness of Anger, Envy, and Greed

THE FIFTH CHAPTER: Concerning the Treatment of the Love for the World

THE SIXTH CHAPTER: The Treatment of the Love of Wealth and the Bane of Miserliness

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER: The Treatment of Love for Rank and Retinue

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER: Concerning the Treatment of Dissimulation and Hypocrisy in Worship

THE NINTH CHAPTER: Concerning the Treatment of Pride and Conceit

THE TENTH CHAPTER: The Treatment of Delusion and Self-Deception

[1025] From the AA text.

CHAPTER ONE: CONCERNING THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SELF AND ITS PURIFICATION FROM A BAD DISPOSITION

In this chapter, we shall discuss the virtue of a good disposition. Then, we shall expound what the true nature of a good disposition is; then, we shall declare that it is possible to achieve this through asceticism; then we shall explain the method of this; then, we shall discuss the signs of a bad disposition; then, we shall explain the plan for that person who recognizes his own faults; then, we shall discover the signs of a good disposition; then, we shall explain the method for raising and training children; then, we shall disclose the way of the earnest striving of the disciple at the beginning of his task.

Disclosing the Virtue and Spiritual Reward of a Good Disposition

Know that God Most High has praised Mustafa[1026] (S) for his good disposition, saying: *And, lo! Thou art of a tremendous nature!* (Q. 68:4) And the Messenger (S) said: "I was sent to complete the excellences of character." And he (S) said: "The greatest thing placed in the scales[1027] is a good disposition."

Someone appeared before the Messenger (S) and asked: "What is religion?" He answered: "A good disposition." They came from the right and the left, asking (the same question again and again). He replied in the same way until at the last time he said: "Dost thou not know? That thou not anger." He (S) was asked: "What is the most virtuous of works?" He said: "A good disposition."

Someone said to the Messenger (S): "Give me some advice." He said: "Fear God Most High wherever thou mayst be." (The man) said: "Another." He said: "Do a good deed after every bad act in order to erase it." (The man) said: "Another." He said: "Mix with people good-naturedly." And he (S) said: "God Most High will not make whomever He has given a good disposition and a good appearance the food of fire."

And he (S) was told: " Such-and-such a woman fasts by day and spends her night in formal prayer, but has a bad disposition and her tongue afflicts her neighbors." He said: "Her place is in hell." And the Messenger (S) said: "A bad disposition ruins devotion as vinegar (ruins) honey."

[1026] "Mustafa" (*Muṣṭafā*): an epithet for the Prophet, Muhammad (S), meaning "chosen, elected."

[1027] The scales that weigh good and bad deeds on the Day of Judgment.

And the Messenger (S) used to say as he made supplication: "O Lord God! Thou hast created my creation well; make my disposition also good." And he (S) used to say: "O Lord God! Grant (us) health, vigor, and a good disposition." The Messenger (S) was asked: "What is the best thing that God Most High gives His servant?" He answered: "A good disposition." And he (S) said: "A good disposition destroys sins as the sun (destroys) ice."

'Abd al-Rahman Samurah[1028] (R) says: "I was with the Messenger (S). He said: 'Last night I saw a strange thing: I saw a man of my own nation fallen on his knees, and there was a veil between him and God Most High. His good disposition came and lifted the veil, and he was transported to God Most High.' And he said: 'With a good disposition, a person achieves the level of him who fasts by day and prays by night. He attains great degrees in the Hereafter, even though his worship is weak."

The best natured of people was our Messenger (S). One day the women were noisy and overwhelming in his presence. When 'Umar entered, they fled. 'Umar (R) said (to them): "O enemies of yourselves! Ye have shame before me and have none before the Messenger of God Most High?" They said: "Thou art fiercer and harsher!" The Messenger (S) said: "O son of Khattab! By that God in Whose judgment lies my life, Satan never sees thee on a road that he does not relinquish that road and travel along another out of awe for thee."

Fudayl 'Iyad, may God have mercy upon him, said: "I prefer the company of a good-natured sinner to that of a bad-natured holy man." Ibn al-Mubarak, may God have mercy upon him, came upon a bad-natured person on the road. When he separated from him, he wept. He was asked: "Why art thou weeping?" He said: "That wretch went away from me and his bad disposition went with him and did not separate from him."

Kattani[1029] (R) says: "Sufism is good disposition. Whoever has a better disposition than thou is more of a Sufi." Yahya bin Mu'adh (R) says: "A bad disposition is a sin which no act of devotion can benefit. A good disposition is an act of devotion to which no sin can offer harm."

The True Nature of a Good Disposition

Know that much has been said about the true nature of a good disposition—as to what and which it is. Each one has talked about that (aspect) which has come before him, but not about its totality. As one says: "It is having a smiling countenance." Another says: "It is taking on

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[1028] 'Abd al-Rahman Samurah: ʿAbd al-Raḥmān bin Samurah bin Ḥabīb bin ʿAbd Shams, a Companion of the Prophet.

[1029] Abu Bakr Kattani: see Note 855.

the troubles of other people." And another says: "It is not returning evil for evil," and so forth. All of these are its branches, but not its essence and totality. We shall disclose its true nature and the boundary of its totality.

Know that a human being has been created of two things: one is the body, which can be seen with the physical eye. The other is the soul, which cannot be perceived except by the eye of the soul. For each one of these two, there is goodness and unseemliness. One is called the beauty of creation; the other, the beauty of disposition. Beauty of disposition consists of the inner form, just as beauty of creation consists of the outer form. As the outer form is not good if only the eyes are good, or only the mouth is good, or only the nose is good, so that the eyes, mouth, and nose together are not good and not suited to one another; in the same manner, the inner form is not good so long as four powers in it are not good: the power of reason, the power of anger, the power of the carnal appetite, and the power of preserving equilibrium[1030] among the other three.

As for the power of reason, by that we mean sagacity,[1031] the goodness of which is enough to easily distinguish between truth and lies in speech, (between) the good and the unseemly in deeds, and between the true and the false in principles of belief. When this perfection has been achieved by the human soul, thence wisdom comes into being, the source of all kinds of happiness, as God Most High said: *And he unto whom wisdom is given, he hath truly received abundant good.* (Q. 2:269)

The goodness of the power of anger is that it be under the command of wisdom and the Religious Law and arise at their command and end at their command.

The goodness of the power of the carnal appetite is that it not be rebellious and that it be under the command of the Religious Law and reason so that its obedience to them may be easy for it.

The goodness of the power of preservation of the equilibrium is that it keep anger and passion subjugated to the direction of religion and reason.

The similitude of anger is that of a hunting dog, the similitude of the carnal appetite is that of a horse, and the similitude of reason is that of a rider. A horse is sometimes refractory and sometimes obedient and trained. A dog is sometimes taught and sometimes it reverts to its own nature. Until the one is taught and the other trained, there is no hope for the rider's obtaining any game. Indeed, there is the fear that he will be killed, that the dog may attack him, or that the horse may throw him to the ground.

[1030] "equilibrium" (*ʿadl*): or "a just balance, justice."
[1031] "sagacity" (*zīrakī*): or "shrewdness, perspicacity."

The meaning of preserving equilibrium is that both of these powers be obedient to reason and religion. Sometimes it makes appetite overpower anger in order to crush (anger's) rebellion; and sometimes it makes anger overcome appetite in order to crush (appetite's) greed. When all four are of this kind, a good disposition is absolute. If (only) some of them are good, this good disposition is not absolute. Just like the person who has a beautiful mouth and ugly eyes, or beautiful eyes and an ugly nose: the beauty is not absolute.

Know that if each one of them is unseemly, they give birth to ugly natures and ugly deeds. The unseemliness of each power has two aspects: one is that which arises from an excess which is too strong, the other from an insufficiency which is a deficit.

The power of knowledge, should it become excessive and involved in bad works, gives rise to deception and pedantry; while if it is deficient, it gives rise to foolishness and stupidity. However, when it is in balance, it gives rise to good planning, correct opinion, right thinking, and sound insight.

The power of anger, should it become excessive, is called impetuosity; while if it is deficient, it is called cowardice and spiritlessness. When it is in balance—not too much or too little—it is called courage. Courage gives rise to nobility, high-mindedness, bravery, mildness, patience, moderation, control of anger, and characteristics like these. From impetuosity come boasting, vanity, conceit, recklessness, vainglory, throwing oneself into dangerous affairs, and the like. From its deficiency come self-abasement, helplessness, apprehension, fawning, and abjectness.

The power of the carnal appetite, should it become excessive, is called gluttony. From it, arise impudence, foulness, unmanliness, uncleanness, jealousy, being despised by the powerful, being contemptuous of the poor, and the like. If it is deficient, lethargy, dastardliness, and dishonor (come). When it is in balance, it is called chasteness. From it, come modesty, contentment, patience, tolerance, grace, wit, and approval.

Each one of these (powers) has two extremes that are condemned and unseemly, but the medium is good and praiseworthy. That medium, between those two extremes, is narrower than a hair. That medium is its Straight Path. It is as narrow as the Bridge of the Hereafter. Whoever walks straight upon this bridge, is sure to (cross) that (other) Bridge tomorrow (in safety).

It is for this that God Most High has ordained the middle way in all characteristics. He has forbidden both extremes, and gives punishment (for them), saying: *And those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor grudging; and there is a firm station between the two.* (Q. 25:67) He praised the person who does not skimp in spending, nor is extravagant, but stands between the two. And the Messenger (S)

was told (by God): *And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck, nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.* (Q. 17:29) He said: "Do not tie up thy hand so as to give nothing, nor open it completely at one time and give away everything, lest thou be left without provisions and helpless."

So then, know that the absolutely good disposition is that in which all elements are balanced and correct within it, just as a beautiful countenance is that in which all of its parts are right and good. Now, in this regard there are four types of people:

One is he who achieves perfection in all of its attributes; he is the perfection of a good disposition. All creation must follow him. That is found in no one save (Muhammad) Mustafa (S), just as Joseph (A) was the paragon of physical beauty.

The second is that all of his attributes be most unseemly. This is the purely bad disposition. It is a duty to expel such a person from society, for he is close to the form of Satan, and Satan is at the extremity of unseemliness. The unseemliness of Satan is an internal unseemliness, and of (his) attributes and character.

The third is that one is between these two degrees, but closer to goodness.

The fourth is that one is the middle, but closer to unseemliness.

Just as with outward beauty where extreme goodness and extreme unseemliness are not common and most fall in between, so it is with a good disposition. Therefore, every one must make an effort so that, even if one does not achieve perfection, one comes nearer to the degree of perfection. If all of one's character is not good, well, some parts or more of it will be good. As there is no limit to the differences between beauty and ugliness, the same is true of one's character.

This is the whole meaning of a good disposition. It is not one thing, nor ten, nor a hundred; for it is much more. However, it originates with the powers of knowledge, anger, passion, and a just equilibrium: the rest are branches of it.

Disclosing That It Is Possible to Achieve a Good Disposition

Know that some have said that just as the external (appearance of) creation cannot be altered from the way it was created—short does not become long by machination, nor does long become short, or ugly beautiful—in the same way, the character which is an internal form cannot be altered. This is an error, for if that were correct, training, discipline, and giving advice and counsel would be useless. Did the Messenger (S) not say: "Make your character good"? How could (alteration) be impossible when dumb animals may be trained from their stubbornness with discipline and wild prey may be domesticated? But

this analogy, when applied to the disposition, is invalid because actions are of two kinds:

There are some that are not affected by human choice, just as a one cannot grow an apple tree from the stone of a date; but one can grow a date palm with the nurture and care that it the requires. In the same way, the roots of anger and carnal passion cannot be driven out of a human being. However, anger and carnal passion can be brought to the limit of moderation with discipline. This is made plain with experience. However, with respect to some people, it is more difficult. This difficulty arises for two reasons: one is that it has become stronger in the essence of one's innate nature, the second is that one has been in obedience to it for a long time, to the point that one is mastered by it. In this, people are at four degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is that one be simple. (This person) has not yet learned good from bad and has not yet become habituated to good or bad. However, he is at the beginning of (the formation of) his nature. He can be moulded and quickly corrected. He needs a person to teach him and to explain the detriment of bad character to him, and to show him the way. Children, at the beginning of their character development, are all like this. Then, their fathers and mothers open the way for them and make them greedy for the world. Then, they abandon them, so that they go about and live as they wish. The blood for their (loss of) religion is upon the necks of their mothers and fathers. It was for this that God Most High said: *Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire...* (Q. 66:6)[1032]

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one has not yet become habituated to anything bad. However, one has made one's nature follow one's passion and anger for a time, yet one knows that that ought not to be done. His case is more difficult, for he is in need of two things: one is that he expel the corrupting nature from himself, the other is that he sow the seed of righteousness in it. However, if earnestness and necessity appear in him, he will be corrected quickly and his nature will abstain from corruption.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that (a person's) nature has been corrupted and he does not know that that should not be done, for (corruption) appears good to him. He will not be amenable to correction, except rarely.

THE FOURTH DEGREE it that, with all of this, (a person) glories in his corruption and supposes that it is some sort of skill, as the braggarts

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[1032] The full text of the verse is: *O ye who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire whereof the fuel is men and stones, over which are set angels strong, severe, who resist not God in that which He commands them, but do that which they are commanded.* (Q. 66:6)

who say: "We have killed so many people," or: "We have drunk so much wine." This person is incurable, unless some heavenly happiness[1033] touch him so that he is not taken down that path.

Disclosing the Manner of Treatment

Know that for whoever desires to expel his bad disposition from himself, there is only one way, and that is that he do the opposite of whatever that (bad) disposition commands him (to do). The carnal appetite cannot be subdued except by opposition. Everything is overcome by its contrary, just as the treatment of an illness that causes heat is the consumption of cold (foods). The treatment of every illness that arises from anger is patience. The treatment of whatever arises from arrogance is humility. The treatment of whatever arises from miserliness is giving away wealth. The same (rule) is valid for all.

Consequently, a good disposition appears in anyone who has made a habit of good works. The inmost mystery of the command of the Religious Law to perform good works is that its purpose is the transformation of the soul from an unseemly form to a good form. Whatever habit a person does by compulsion becomes his nature. At the beginning, a child tries to escape from school and teaching, but when he is forced to study, it becomes his habit. When he grows up, all of his pleasure is in knowledge. He cannot keep himself away from it. Indeed, a person who has become habituated to gaming with pigeons, playing chess, or gambling—so that it becomes second-nature to him—will give all the comforts of the world and all that he has for those (pursuits) and cannot keep away from them. However, things that are contrary to one's temperament become of that temperament with (the formation) of habit.

There are people who take pride, out of being roving charlatans, in enduring being beaten with clubs and having their hands cut off. (There are) effeminates who, despite the despicableness of their deeds, glory in their effeminacy. Indeed, if one looks among barbers[1034] and sweepers, they too boast about their own work to each other among themselves, as do the learned and kings together. All these are the fruits of habit. Moreover, there is the person who has become accustomed to eating clay, and may become so that he cannot keep away from it and continues to endure illness and the danger of death (from it).

Therefore, since that which is contrary to nature becomes natural by habit, that which is consonant with one's nature, and becomes for the soul as food and drink is for the body. It is better that the habit of worship, the knowledge of God Most High, and devotion to Him be

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[1033] That is, divine intervention.

[1034] "barbers": a barber (*ḥajjām*), in addition to the shaving and the cutting of hair, also let blood and was traditionally proficient in the practice of "cupping" with leeches.

acquired. Keeping anger and appetite under control is appropriate to human nature, for (that nature) is of the essence of the angels and (doing that) is his nourishment. He whose inclination is contrary to this has become sick so that his nourishment has become unpleasant to him. As for the sick person, it may be that he holds the nourishment in enmity while he becomes eager for that which is harmful to him.

Consequently, anyone who likes something more than the knowledge of God Most High and obedience to (Him) is ill. As God Most High said: *There is a sickness in their hearts.* (Q. 2:10) And He said: *Except him who comes to God with a sound heart.* (Q. 26:89) As the sick body is in danger of ruin in this world, so the sick soul is in danger of ruin in the next world. As there is no hope of recovery for the sick person, except that which is contrary to his own desires, he takes bitter medicine at the doctor's order. So, too, for the sick soul, there is no stratagem except opposition to the appetites of the self at the word of the Master of the Religious Law, the physician of the people's souls.

To summarize, physical medicine and spiritual medicine both have one method: the cooling of the hot, and the heating of the cold. In the same way, a person who is dominated by pride is cured by being compelled to be humble; and if a person is dominated by humility reaching the point of meanness, he is cured by being compelled to have (more) pride. Now, know thou that there are three causes for good character:

One is that it is innate. It is a gift and a favor from God Most High for a person to be created with an innately good disposition. For example, one is created generous, another is created humble, and there are many like that. The second is that one can force oneself to become accustomed to doing good works so that it becomes habitual. The third is that one sees persons whose character and deeds are good. One should associate with them so that one may necessarily take upon oneself those attributes, even if one is not aware of (the transformation).

He in whom these three felicities appear—having an innate good character, having association with the good, and making good works a habit—is at the degree of perfection. Whoever is deprived of these three things—one whose innate character is deficient, one who associates with scoundrels, and who makes a habit of evil deeds—is at the degree of perfect wretchedness.

Between these (two extremes), there are many degrees having more or less, and the happiness and wretchedness for each is according to their amounts. (*On that day people will come forth in sundry bodies that they may be shown their works.*) *So he who does an atom's weight of*

good will see it. And he who does an atom's weight of evil will see it. (Q. 99:6-8)[1035]

Excursus: [The Beginning of All (Spiritual) Happiness Is Taking Pains in (the Performance of) Good Deeds]

Know that actions are (the province) of the limbs of the body, but the objective (of actions) is the turning round of the soul, for it is the soul that will travel to the next world. Everything must be beautiful and perfect to be appropriate to the Divine Presence. It must be straight like an untarnished mirror to reflect the Heavenly Form in it and (for one) to see a Beauty that will beggar the descriptions of heaven that one has heard. Even though the body will also have a portion in that world, the soul is primary and the body secondary.

Know that the soul is one thing and the body another. The soul is of the celestial world and the body of the visible world. Thou hast learned this under that heading in (this) book.[1036]

However, even though the body is separate from the soul, nonetheless it has a connection with it. For, from every good act of the body a light attaches itself to the soul, while from every bad act of the body a darkness attaches itself to the soul. That light is the seed of (spiritual) happiness and that darkness is the seed of (spiritual) misery. It is because of this connection that a person is brought to this world: in order that he make of his body a net and an instrument to acquire the attributes of perfection for himself.

Know that writing is an art that is an attribute of the soul, but its action is by the fingers. If a person desires that his handwriting be good, the method is that he continually write in a good hand so that the form of the writing becomes beautiful. When that is accomplished, the fingers begin to receive that shape from inside and to put it into the writing. So, in the same manner, from the external good act one's inner self begins to assume a good character. When good character has become an internalized attribute, then deeds assume the attributes of that character.

Therefore, the beginning of all (spiritual) happiness is taking pains in (the performance of) good deeds. The fruit of this is that the soul internalizes good qualities. Then, their light shines outside and good deeds begin to be accepted naturally and voluntarily. The secret of this is that connection which is between the soul and the body, for one affects the other and vice versa. It is for this that any act done negligently is in vain, for the soul has not given that act any part of its attributes because the soul was unaware of it.

[1035] Text cites only verses 7 and 8. We have added the preceding verse to make the context clear.

[1036] See the first section of the Third Topic of the Prolegomena.

EXCURSUS: [ALL GOOD CHARACTER MUST BECOME NATURAL AND TAKING PAINS DEPART]

Know that the sick person whose illness is coldness should not eat things that are very hot, for it may be that the heat become an illness. Rather, there is a scale and a standard which must be observed. It must be known that the objective is that the temperament be equable: neither inclining to heat, nor inclining to cold. When it has reached the level of equability, the treatment is withdrawn and the effort becomes the maintenance of that balance. (The patient) eats temperate things.

In the same manner, all character has two aspects: one is praiseworthy and one is blameworthy. The objective is moderation. For example, we order the miser to give away wealth until it becomes easy for him, but not to the point of extravagance, for that is also blameworthy. But the scale for (weighing) that is from the Religious Law, just as the scale for (weighing) the treatment of the body is the science of medicine. He must become so that whatever the Law commands him to give, he gives, and its giving becomes easy for him and that there not be in him a demand to keep and hold on to (wealth). And whatever the Law commands him to keep, he should keep and the urge to give (of that) not be in him, so that he be moderate. Therefore, if those urges continue to appear in him—but he represses them by force—he is still ill. However, he is praiseworthy because he is indeed forcing himself to take his medicine and this compulsion is the way that (good character) will become natural to him.

It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: "Obey the command of God Most High: if ye cannot, then (obey Him) with displeasure, for there is much goodness in being patient." Know that every person who forces himself to give away wealth is not generous. Rather, generous is the person for whom giving away wealth is easy. Whoever forces himself to retain wealth is not a miser. Rather, the miser is the person whose nature it is to keep (things).

Therefore, all character should be natural and taking pains should depart. Indeed, the perfection of character is that one surrender one's reins to the hand of the Law and that obedience to it becomes easy. No struggle remains (against it) in one. As God Most High said: *But no, by thy Lord! They believe not until they make thee a judge of what is in dispute between them; then, they find not any straitness in their hearts...* (Q. 4:65) He said: "Their faith will be completed by making thee their judge, not retaining any heaviness or narrowness in their hearts." There is a mystery for this to which a reference has been made even though this book could not contain (the mystery itself).

Know that the (spiritual) happiness of a human being is that one become of the nature of angels. For, one's essence is of them and one has come into this world a stranger. One's origin is the world of the angels.

Every foreign characteristic that one bears from here distances one from being in conformity with (the angels). When going to that place, one must become of their character and not carry any attributes from this place.

Whoever is avid for the preservation of wealth is obsessed with wealth and whoever is avid to spend it is also obsessed with wealth. Whoever is intent upon being haughty is obsessed with people and whoever is intent upon being humble is also obsessed with people. But the angels are neither obsessed with wealth, nor with people. Indeed, because of their love for the Divine Presence, they pay attention to nothing else.

Therefore, the connection of the human soul to wealth must be severed and cut off from people so that (the soul) may be cleansed of all of them. Any attribute that it is not possible for a person to eliminate should be kept at the (the level of) moderation, so that in one way it is as though it were eliminated. As water is not devoid of warmth or coldness, that which is tepid and equable resembles that which is devoid of both (extremes). Therefore, moderation and the mean in all qualities have been commanded because they are better.

So, the soul should be observed as to whether it is cut off from all and immersed in God Most High. As He said: *Say: I ask you not for any reward for (the Quran). It is naught but a Reminder to the nations.* (Q. 6:91) Indeed, the reality of *There is no god but God* is exactly this. Because it is not possible for a human being to be free of all contamination, He said: *And there is not one of you but shall come to it. This is an unavoidable decree of thy Lord.* (Q. 19:71)

Finally, from this, it is plain that end of all disciplines and the aim of all exertions is that a person reach the Unity of God: that he see it and naught else, that he read it and naught else, that he be obedient to it and naught else. In his inner being, no other urge remains. When it is thus, a good character has been achieved. Indeed, one has passed over from the world of mankind and reached the true nature of God.

EXCURSUS: [THE WAYS OF ACHIEVING A GOOD CHARACTER]

Know that ascetic self-discipline is a difficult and torturous[1037] task, but if the physician is a master and knows pleasant medicine for the way, it becomes much easier. It is the physician's grace that he does not call the disciple at first to the degree of the true nature of God, for he would not have the strength to endure that. If one says to a child: "Go to the school until thou reachest the level of principalship." (The child) does not know what the pleasure of principalship may be. Instead, one should

[1037] Literally: "the agony of death; the tearing out of the soul" (*jān kandan*).

say: "Go to the school and I shall give thee a stick and a ball tonight to play with," so that the child will go to school out of a desire for that. When he gets older, one persuades him with fine clothing and ornaments so that he will refrain from play. When he gets older, one promises him with mastership and chieftainship and says: "Silk clothing is for women." When he is older, then one says: "Mastership and chieftainship of the world have no basis, for death will destroy all of them." Then one promises him the everlasting kingdom.

Consequently, it may be that the student at the beginning of the task not be able to be completely sincere. One is tolerant with him so that he continue to strive in the eagerness that people will look upon him favorably, until one shatters the inclination to dissimulation, the greed of the belly, and the greed for wealth in him. When he has been liberated from those, a languor appears in him. Then, one must dispel the greed for that languor in him by commanding him to beg in the marketplace. When an acceptance of that appears in him,[1038] one should prevent that by engaging him in some menial tasks, such as cleaning lavatories, etc.

In the same way, one must gradually order the treatment for each characteristic that appears in him, (but) not all at once, for he would not be able to endure that. One can draw upon all kinds of afflictions for the inclination to dissimulation and fame. For example, all such characteristics are like serpents and scorpions. The similitude of dissimulation is the dragon that swallows everything. The last of the characteristics to depart from the truly righteous is that.

Disclosing the Method for Recognizing the Sickness of the Soul and the Defects of the Self

Know that just as the soundness of the body, hands, feet, and eyes lies in that each one of them be able to do completely that for which it was created—that the eye see well and the foot walk well; so the soundness of the soul lies in that the special quality, which is its original nature and for which it was created, be easy for it, and that it be the loving friend of that which is in its original nature.[1039]

[The Signs of a Soul's Soundness]

This is found in two things, one in will and the other in power:

As for the will, in it there is nothing more preferred than God Most High, for the spiritual knowledge of God Most High is the

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[1038] That is, when that humiliating task no longer affects him and he becomes indifferent to it.

[1039] "original nature" (*asl-i fitrat*): that is, the angelic essence.

nourishment of the soul, just as food is the nourishment of the body. A body from which the craving for food has departed or in which it has grown weak is sick. A soul from which the love for God Most High has departed, or in which it has grown weak, is sick. It is for this that God Most High said: *Say: If your fathers and your sons...* (Q. 9:24) "If ye love your fathers, your sons, your wives, your kinsfolk, and that which ye possess more than God Most High; be patient until the command of God Most High arrives and ye shall see!"[1040]

AS FOR THE POWER, it is that obedience to God Most High has become easy and one finds no need to coerce oneself in that. Rather, it is in itself one's pleasure. As the Messenger (S) said: "*Formal prayer has become the light of my eyes.*"[1041]

Therefore, for a person who does not find these two qualities in himself, this is a certain symptom of his soul's sickness. He must attend to its treatment. It may be that he think that (his soul) possesses that character,[1042] while it does not. For a person is (often) blind to his own faults.

And the defects of the self can be recognized in four ways:

One is that one resort to an experienced and mature spiritual guide so that that spiritual guide may examine him and disclose the person's defects to him. In this era, this is unusual and rare.

The second is that one have a sympathetic friend watch over oneself, one who will not conceal one's defects out of flattery, nor magnify them out of envy. This, too, is rare. Dawud Tayi (R) was asked: "Why dost thou not associate and mix with people?" He replied: "What is the point of associating with a people who see my faults and conceal them from me?"

The third is that one listen to the talk of one's enemies about oneself, for the eye of the enemy always falls upon the faults. Even if he exaggerates out of his enmity, his words are still not devoid of truth.

The fourth is that one should study people. One should constantly be on the watch for any defect in oneself that one sees in someone else. One should suspect one's self, for it may be the same.

[1040] Ghazzali introduces the verse (Q. 9:24) with its first words and then paraphrases it. The full text of the Quranic verse is thus: *Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your wives and your kinsfolk and the wealth you have acquired, and trade whose dullness you fear, and the dwellings you love, are dearer to you that God and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait until God brings His command to pass. And God guides not the transgressing people.*

[1041] "*the light of mine eyes*": something beloved.

[1042] "of that character": that is, "sound."

Jesus (A) was asked: "Who taught thee the rules of conduct?" He replied: "No one. I kept away from whatever I found unseemly in others." Know that the more foolish a person is, the more he considers himself good. The more intelligent one is, the more he suspects himself. 'Umar (R) used to ask Hudhayfah[1043] (R): "The Messenger (S) has told thee the secret of the hypocrites. What signs of hypocrisy dost thou find in me?" So, each person must seek out his own faults, for it he does not know the disease, he cannot remedy it.

All remedies meet the opposition of the carnal appetite. As God Most High said: *But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, lo! Paradise shall be his home.* (Q. 79:40-41)

The Messenger (S) used to say to the Companions when they returned from battle in defence of religion: "Ye have come from the lesser striving to the greater striving." They asked: "What is that?" He answered: "The striving against one's self." And the Messenger (S) said: "Restrain the torment of thyself from the self and do not give rein to its whims in disobedience to[1044] God Most High Who will judge thee tomorrow and curse thee until thy parts all curse one another."

Hasan Basri (R) says: "There is no headstrong steed more difficult to rein in that the self." Sari Saqati (R) says: "For forty years, my self has wished me to dip a round cake into honey and eat it, but I have not yet done so."

Ibrahim Khawwas (R) says: "I was walking on Mount Lukkam in Lebanon[1045] and I saw many pomegranates. I felt a desire for some. I picked one. It was sour. I withheld my hand and went on my way. I saw a fallen man. Bees were collecting about him and stinging him. He said: '*Peace be upon thee*, Ibrahim.' I asked: 'How didst thou know who I was?' He said: 'Nothing is concealed from whoever knows God Most High.' I said: 'I see that thou hast some state with God Most High. Why dost thou not ask Him to keep the bees away from thee?' He said: 'Thou

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[1043] Hudhayfah: Hudhayfah bin al-Yaman, al 'Absi. Together with his brother and father, he embraced Islam at hands of the Prophet. Intelligent and energetic, he devoted himself to a study of evil and hypocrisy and was called the enemy of hypocrisy. Upon the death of the Muslim commander at the battle of Nihawand (in Iran), he took over and led the troops to victory over the Persians thereby opening Iran to Islam. He was the governor of Armenia for a while during the caliphate of 'Uthman. He died in AH36/656-7CE.

[1044] "in disobedience to" (*andar ma'siyat*): or "in sinning against." Disobeying God Most High is, of course, a sin.

[1045] "Mount Lukkam in Lebanon": A mountain, then so called, in western Syria that extends from the region of Hamah to Antakya (ancient Antioch) in Turkey. It should be remarked that the "Lebanon" of the reference does not coincide geographically with the modern state of Lebanon which was carved out of Syria in 1926 by the French in order to create a Christian-majority state in the Near East. Rather, it refers to the mountain system of that name.

too have a state. Why dost thou not ask that He take away the craving for pomegranates, for the wounds of the appetites are in the next world, and the wounds of the bees are in this world?"

Know that even though the pomegranate is lawful, yet the prudent have learned that the appetite for both the lawful and the unlawful is the same. If thou dost not shut the door of the lawful upon (the appetite) and thou dost not return it to the limit of necessity, it will seek the unlawful. For this reason, they have forbidden to themselves the appetites with respect to permitted things in order to escape appetite. As 'Umar (R) said: "I have refrained from seventy categories of lawful things out fear that I may fall into the unlawful."

Another reason is that when the self becomes accustomed to comfort and ease, it acquires a love for the permitted things of the world and the soul becomes attached to them, turning the world into its heaven. Death becomes difficult. Insolence and heedlessness appear in one's soul. When one engages in the remembrance (of God) and secret conversation (with God), one finds no pleasure in it. Since lawful passions keep him from this, he becomes discomfited and troubled. The world becomes hateful to him and an eagerness for the comfort of the Hereafter appears in (his soul). In a state of sorrow and broken-heartedness, a single glorification will have the effect upon his soul that hundreds (of glorifications) did not have when he was in a state of joy and ease.

The similitude of the self is the falcon that is trained by putting it into a chamber and covering its eyes in order to restrain it from all that was in it of its falcon-ness. Then, gradually, it will be given meat so that it may become familiar with the falconer and obedient to him. In the same way, the self does not find intimacy with God Most High so long as thou dost not wean it from all habits and dost not close off the eyes, tongue, and ears (to such things), and thou dost not discipline it with seclusion, hunger, silence, and sleeplessness. In the beginning, this will be difficult for it—just as when a child is weaned from milk. Afterwards, (the child) will become so that if one tries to give him milk by force, he will not be able to drink it.

Know that the spiritual discipline for every person is that he give up whatever it is that pleases him more and that he do the contrary of whatever (tendency) is more dominant. The person whose delight is in rank and pomp must abandon them. The one whose happiness is wealth must spend it. In the same way, one must forcibly sever oneself from any source of happiness other than God Most High. One must attend upon that which will attend upon one forever. One should abandon voluntarily all that one will abandon at death. One's attendant is God Most High, as God Most High revealed to David (A): "O David, I am thine attendant; be thou My attendant." And the Messenger (S) said: "Gabriel breathed into me (the words) *Love whom thou wilt; verily thou wilt be separated*

from him." Love whomever thou wilt of the world, for he will be taken from thee. *Peace!*

Disclosing the Signs of a Good Character

Know that the signs of a good character are those which God Most High has described concerning the believers in the Quran in the first ten verses of the chapter beginning: *Successful indeed are the believers...* (Q. 23:1-10),[1046] and in the verse where He says: *Those who turn in repentance and those who serve (Him)...* (Q. 9:112),[1047] and in those verses where He says: *And the servants of the Compassionate are they who walk upon the earth modestly* to the end (of the chapter) (Q. 25:63-77).[1048]

And whatever He has said about the signs of the hypocrites are the signs of a bad character. As the Messenger (S) said: "The aspiration of the believer is formal prayer, fasting, and worship, but the aspiration of the hypocrite is food and drink, like that of a dumb animal." Hatim Asamm (R) says: "The believer is occupied with reflection and admonition, while the hypocrite (is occupied) with envy and expectation. The believer is safe from everyone save God Most High, while the hypocrite fears everyone save God Most High. The believer has no hope from anyone save God Most High, while the hypocrite has hopes from everyone save God Most High. The believer sacrifices his wealth for religion, while the hypocrite sacrifices his religion for wealth. The believer is always obedient and always weeping, while the hypocrite is always sinning and always laughing. The believer prefers solitude and seclusion, while the hypocrite prefers mixing and crowds. The believer always sows and fears that he not will not reap, while the hypocrite never sows and is ambitious to reap."

And it has been said thus: "A person of good character is he who is modest, says little, causes little trouble, speaks the truth, seeks the good, worships much, has few faults, meddles little, desires the good for

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[1046] The full text is: *Successful indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers, and who shun vain conversation, and who are payers of the poor-rate and who guard their modesty—save from their wives or those their right hands possess, for then they are not blameworthy, but whoso craveth beyond that, such are transgressors—and who are shepherds of their pledge and their covenant, and who pay heed to their prayers: these are the heirs who will inherit Paradise. There they will abide.* (Q. 23:1-11) We have added the 11th verse to complete the passage.

[1047] Q. 9:112: *Those who turn in repentance and those who serve (Him), those who praise (Him), those who fast, those who bow down, those who fall prostrate (in worship), those who enjoin the right and who forbid the wrong and those who keep the limits (ordained) by God and give glad tidings to the believes!*

[1048] Q. 24:63-77: too long to quote here. A warning to wrong doers and a promise of Paradise to those who do good.

all, and does good works for all. He is compassionate, dignified, measured, patient, content, grateful, sympathetic, friendly, abstinent, and not greedy. He does not use foul language, nor does he exhibit haste, nor does he harbor rancor in his heart. He is not envious. He is candid, well-spoken, and his friendship and enmity, his anger and his pleasure are for the sake of God Most High and nothing more."

Know that good character usually comes from endurance and patience, just as when the Messenger (S) was much tormented and his teeth were broken, he said: "O Lord God! Show them the way for they do not know."

Ibrahim Adham (R) was crossing a plain. A soldier came to him and asked: "Art thou a slave?" He answered: "Yes." (The soldier) asked: "Where is there a town?" (Ibrahim) pointed to a cemetery. (The soldier) said: "I am looking for a settlement." (Ibrahim) said: "It is a settlement there." The soldier struck him with a club so hard that (Ibrahim) was covered with blood. The soldier grabbed him and dragged him to the city. When (Ibrahim's) friends saw him, they cried to the soldier: "Fool! This is Ibrahim Adham, the nonpareil of this epoch!" The soldier dismounted from his horse and kissed (Ibrahim's) feet. Then he asked him: "Why didst thou say thou wert a slave?" Ibrahim answered: "Because I am a slave of God Most High." (The soldier) asked: "Why didst thou indicate the cemetery as a settlement?" He said: "There is a promise for all there; therefore it is a settlement." The soldier said: "As I have behaved rudely, forgive me."[1049] Then Ibrahim said: "When he broke my head, I offered supplications for him." They asked: "Why?" He answered: "Because I knew that there would be spiritual reward for me because of him. I did not desire that my portion be better than his and his portion be worse than mine."

Abu 'Uthman Hiri[1050] was invited by someone to test him. When he arrived at the door of the house, (the host) did not allow him to enter, saying: "There is nothing left." (Abu 'Uthman) went back. After he had gone a short distance, (the host) came after him and called him to come back. (Abu 'Uthman) returned. When he arrived at the door of the house, (the host) would not admit him and said the same thing. (Abu 'Uthman) left. (The host) did this several times: his calling (Abu 'Uthman), (Abu 'Uthman's) arriving and then being turned away and his departure. (The host) said: "What a good character thou havest!" (Abu 'Uthman) said: "That which thou hast seen of me is the character of a dog. When thou

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[1049] "Forgive me": literally, "Make it lawful for me" (*marā dar hall kun*).

[1050] Abu 'Uthman Hiri: Saᶜīd bin Ismāᶜīl al-Hīrī, Abū ᶜUthmān al-Nīsābūrī. There are many references to him in Qushayri. Hujwiri credits him the spread of Sufism in Nishapur and Khorasan. He associated with Yahya bin Mu'adh (see Note 778), Abu Hafs (see Note 1702), Shah Shuja' Kirmani, Junayd (see Note 468), and many others of the period. He died AH298/910-11CE.

callest him, he comes; when thou drivest him away, he goes. How valuable is that?"

One day someone emptied a basin of ashes from a roof on (Abu 'Uthman Hiri's) head. He wiped off his clothing and gave thanks. He was asked: "Why didst thou give thanks?" He said: "It is a cause for thanks when peace is made with a person who deserves Fire with ashes."

'Ali bin Musa al-Rida[1051] (A) had a dark color. By the door of his residence in Nishabur, there was a bathhouse. When he used to go the bathhouse, they would empty it. One day, they emptied the bathhouse and he went into it. The bathhousekeeper was inattentive. A villager entered the bath. Seeing ('Ali bin Musa), he thought that he was an Indian, a servant of the bath. (The villager) said: "Get up! Bring water!" ('Ali bin Musa) brought some water. Then (the villager) said: "Get up and bring some clay."[1052] He brought some. (The villager) continued to issue orders and ('Ali bin Musa) continued to execute them. When the bathhousekeeper returned and heard the villager addressing ('Ali bin Musa), he grew afraid and fled. When ('Ali bin Musa) came out of the bath, he was told that the bathhousekeeper had fled out of fear because of the incident. ('Ali bin Musa) said: "Tell him not to flee. The offense was his who gave his seed to a black serving girl."

'Abdullah the Tailor[1053] (R) was of the great ones of his age. A Magian[1054] used to order garments from him every year and pay him each time with adulterated silver. He would accept it and say nothing. One time he was absent and his apprentice refused to accept the adulterated silver coins. When ('Abdullah) came back, he asked: "Why didst thou do that? He has been doing that to me for many years and I have not tasked him with it. I accepted (the false money) so that (another) Muslim would not be deceived by that bad money and so that I could bury it."

Uways Qarani (R) used to go walking and some children would throw stones at him. He would say: "Indeed! Throw small stones lest my legs be broken and I not be able to stand to perform formal prayer." Someone used to insult Ahnaf Qays (R). (That person) would go along with him and (Ahnaf) would remain silent. When he approached his own

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[1051] ʿAlī bin Mūsā al-Ridā: Abū al-Hasan ʿAli bin Mūsā, the eighth Imam of the Shiahs, whose tomb at Mashhad in northeastern Iran is a great center of pilgrimage (Harun al-Rashid is buried in the same precincts), was born at Madinah AH148/765CE and died in Khorasan AH203/818CE, possibly by poisoning. He was possessed of learning, piety, and a pleasant personality that attracted many followers.

[1052] "clay" (*gil*): A special clay used to wash the body in public baths.

[1053] 'Abdullah the Tailor: ʿAbdullāh al-Khayyāt. (*Khayyāt* means "tailor" in Arabic; the Persian word is *darzī*, which Ghazzali employs.) Qushayri relates the same anecdote.

[1054] "a Magian" (*gabr*): a term usually applied to the Zoroastrians who were also called "fire worshippers." It was sometimes extended more generally to include pagans and unbelievers. The Biblical "*Magi*" comes from the Persian *majūs*, which is perhaps somewhat more specifically related to the Zoroastrians.

tribe, he stood and said to that person: "If thou hast anything more to say, say it here; for if my people hear thee, they will injure thee." A woman said to Malik Dinar: "O hypocrite!" He replied: "The people of Basrah had lost my name; thou hast found it again!"

These are the signs of the perfection of good character that those people had. They are the qualities of persons who, by self-discipline, have totally cleansed themselves of the qualities of (their) human nature and see nothing except God Most High. Whatever they see, they see as from Him. A person who, because of his self, does not see this, nor any little thing resembling it, must not deceive himself and suppose himself to have a good character. *Peace!*

Disclosing the Raising and Training of Children

Know that a child is a trust in the hands of the mother and father. His pure soul is a precious substance that may be moulded like wax. It is a *tabula rasa*. It is like clean earth that will grow any seed thou throwest into it. If thou sowest a good seed, it will achieve the happiness of religion and the world, and the mother, father, and teacher will share in the spiritual reward of that. If it is its the opposite, then (the child) will be miserable and they will share in whatever (misfortune) comes to him. God Most High says: *Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire.* (Q. 66:6) Preserve yourselves and your children from the fire of hell. It is more important to protect your children from the fire of hell than from the fire of this world.

Protecting him is by means of training him, instilling a good character in him, and protecting him from bad companions, for the origins of all kinds of corruption arise from bad companions. He should not be habituated to comfort and ease and to wearing fine clothing, for then he will not be able to do without them and will waste his entire life in trying to get them. Rather, one should try from the very beginning, so that the woman whose milk he drinks should be righteous, of good character, and one whose subsistence is lawful, because a bad character spreads from the wet nurse, and the milk that is produced from unlawful nourishment is unclean. The flesh and skin of the child develops from (that unlawful milk) and an affinity to that (unlawfulness) will develop in his nature that will become apparent after puberty.

When (the child) begins to talk, his first word must be "God" (*Allāh*), and this must be continually prompted to him. When he begins to feel shame about some things, this is good news and the proof that the enlightening rays of reason have fallen upon him. He makes a policeman out of the shame that embarrasses him at every unseemliness.

The first thing that will be discovered in (the infant) is a voracious appetite for nourishment. One must begin teaching him the behavior of eating so that he eats with the right hand, saying: "In the

name of God." (He should) not eat rapidly, and chew small bites; nor should he look at what others are eating, nor take another morsel in his hand until he has swallowed that one in his mouth. (He should) not soil his hand and clothing. From time to time, give him plain bread so that he not become habituated to stew. One should make over-eating appear unseemly to him and say: "That is the way of dumb animals and the unwise." One should criticize a child who eats too much in his presence and praise a child who eats little and observes the rules of etiquette in his presence, so that the vein of pride may pulse in him and he too become like that.

One should make white clothing seem good to his eye, and one should hold silken and colored clothing blameworthy to his eye, saying: "Those are the affair of women and lovelies, and self-adornment is the affair of the effeminate, not the affair of men." One should take care that children wearing silk garments and enjoying comfort and ease do not fall in with him[1055] and that he does not see them; for that will be his ruin as he will also desire them. One should keep (the child) from bad companions. Every child not so guarded will become impudent, lying, stubborn, and reckless. These (qualities) will not depart from his nature for a long time.

When he is handed over to school, he will learn the Quran. After that, he studies the Traditions, the stories of the saints, and the lives of the Companions and the forefathers. Of course, one does not permit him to occupy himself with verses in which there is talk of love and the characteristics of women. One should guard him from the teacher who says: "One's nature becomes refined with that." He is not a teacher, rather, he is a devil who is sowing the seed of corruption in (the child).

When the child is working well and a good character appears in him, he should be praised and one should give him something to make him happy, and one should praise him before others. However, if he makes a mistake once or twice, it should be overlooked so that words (of admonition) not become ineffectual, especially if (the error) is not public. If one talks too much to him, he will become emboldened and commit (the mistake) openly. When he continues to repeat (the mistake), one should reprimand him privately, saying: "Take care that no one learn this about thee, for thou wilt be disgraced among the people and thou wilt be held of no account." The father should keep his dignity with him and the mother should make him fear his father.

One should not permit him to sleep during the day; he will become lazy. So that his body will grow strong, he should not sleep upon soft bedclothes at night. One should not prevent him for playing an hour

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[1055] Him: the prohibition of silk clothing, etc., applies only to males. Girls and women may wear silk.

everyday so that he will become well-trained and not become gloomy; that leads to a bad nature and to his becoming dull. One should make him accustomed to being humble with all persons and to refrain from boasting or bragging to other children.

He should not accept anything from (other) children. Rather, he should give to them. He should be told: "Accepting (things) is the work of beggars and those lacking in good ambition." He should, of course, not open himself to the appetite for gold, silver, and goods that he receives from another person, for he will be spoiled by that and fall into unbecoming habits.

One should teach him that he should not to spit or blow the fluid out of his nose in the presence of others. He should not turn his back upon people. He should sit properly and not put his hand under his chin, for that is the proof of indolence. He should not talk much and, of course, not swear oaths. He should not speak until addressed. He should respect those older than he, and he should not approach them (on his own). He should eschew curses and foul language. If the teacher beats him, one should tell him not to cry out, complain too much, or rouse an intercessor. He should be patient and say: "This is the work of men. Crying aloud is the work of women and serving girls."

When he is seven years old, he should be ordered to perform the formal prayers and observe the rules of purification. When he is ten years old, if he misses formal prayer, one should beat and correct him. One should make theft, eating the unlawful, and lying unseemly in his eyes and always treat them with contempt.

If he is brought up like this, he is told the underlying reasons for these rules of conduct when he achieves puberty: "The object of food is that it give strength to the servant for devotion to God Most High. The purpose of the world is the acquisition of the provisions for Hereafter—for the world does not remain with a person and death comes unexpectedly—so that one may achieve Paradise and the pleasure of God Most High. One begins to describe heaven and hell and the spiritual reward or punishment for deeds to him. If he has been reared with good training from the beginning, these words will be as though engraved upon stone (for him). If he has been left on his own, (these words) will fall to the ground like dust from a wall.

Sahl Tustari (R) says: "I was three years old when I used to watch my maternal uncle, Muhammad (bin) Suwar,[1056] when he performed the evening obligatory formal prayer. One time, he said to me: 'Dost thou not remember that God who created thee at all, lad?' I said: 'How do I do that?' He said: 'When thou gettest into thy bedding at

[1056] **Muḥammad (bin) Suwār**: As the uncle of Sahl Tustari (see Note 779), he would have been active in the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century.

night, say three times—in thy heart, not aloud—"God Most High is with me. God Most High is watching me. God Most High sees me."' I said: 'I have been saying that for a number of nights.' Then he said: 'Say it seven times every night.' I did that; then he said: 'Say it fifteen times every night.' I did that and then the sweetness of that fell into my heart. After a year, he said to me: 'Remember what I have told thee all thy life, until that time when they place thee in thy grave. It will hold thy hand in this world and the next.' I continued to repeat (his words) for a number of years until their sweetness appeared in my conscience. Then, one day, my uncle said to me: 'Whomever God is with and whomever He observes and whomever He sees does not sin. Take care that thou dost not sin, for He sees thee.'

"Then I was sent to a school. I was upset. I said: 'Do not send me (there) for more than an hour every day.' That was until I had learned the Quran; I was seven years old. When I was ten, I continually fasted and ate barley bread until I was twelve. In my thirteenth year, a question entered my soul. I said: 'Send me to Basrah so that I may ask the religious scholars of Basrah.' I was sent there. I asked all of the religious scholars, but they could not resolve it. I went to 'Abbadan[1057] where a man had been suggested to me. He resolved my problem. I stayed with him for a while, then I came to Tustar[1058] and I bought some barley with a silver dirham, breaking my fast with barley bread without any stew or sauce. I made do with that silver dirham for a year. Then, I decided to go three days and nights without eating anything in order to inure myself to that. Then, I did it for a five-day period, then seven days, until I was able to fast for twenty-five days and nights without eating anything. I endured this for twenty years and remained awake at night (in prayer and supplication)."

This story has been related so that it may become plain that the seed for every great deed is sown in childhood. *Peace!*

Disclosing the Prerequisites of the Disciple at the Outset of His Earnest Striving and the Manner of His Treading the Path of Religion With Self-Discipline

Know that the reason for someone's not reaching God is that he has not traveled the path. The reason for someone's not traveling the path is that he has not sought it. The reason for someone's not seeking it is that he did not know, and his belief was incomplete. Indeed, the desire for the quest for the provisions of the Hereafter appears in whoever knows that the world causes misery and is but of a few days in duration,

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[1057] ʿAbbādān: Modern Ābādān in southwestern Iran.

[1058] Tustar: Modern Shūshtar in southwestern Iran.

while the Hereafter is pure and everlasting. It is not a hardship for him to exchange something despicable for something valuable. Putting down the earthen jug so that tomorrow one will receive a golden jug is not very difficult.

Therefore, the cause of all of this is the weakness of faith, and the cause of the weakness of faith is the disappearance of guides who lead and guide the way of the abstemious religious scholar. None of these are left. As there are no leaders and guides, the way remains empty and people have been deprived of their (spiritual) happiness. Those who are left of the religious scholars, their hearts have been overcome by the love of the world. Since they are in search of the world, how can they summon the people from the world to the Hereafter? The way of the world is opposite to the way of the Hereafter. The world and the Hereafter are like the East and the West; to whichever thou drawest closer, thou goest farther away from the other.

Consequently, if the desire for God Most High appears in someone, and he is one of those about whom God Most High says: *And he who desires the Hereafter...* (Q. 17:19), he should know what the effort is when He continues: *...and strives for it with the effort necessary.* (Q. 17:19)[1059] Know that this effort[1060] is the traveling of the way! The traveler must first possess certain requisites that he has previously acquired; then, there is the document that he must hold firmly; then, there are a fortress and a castle that will give him refuge.

[The Veils Between God and the Created]

It is a prerequisite that one first lift the veil between the self and God so as not to be one of those people about whom God Most High says: *We have set a barrier before them and a barrier behind them (and have covered them so that they see not).* (Q. 36.9) The veils are four: wealth, rank, following precedent, and sin.

As for WEALTH, it is a veil when it engages the soul. The way cannot be traveled except with an unencumbered soul. Wealth must be removed except for that necessary amount so that it will not preoccupy (one). If there is someone who has nothing and another takes care of him, his way will be completed more quickly.

As for the veil of RANK AND POMP, one must arise and flee from them. One must go to some place where one is not known. If one is well-known, one will always be engaged with people and with the pleasure of

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[1059] The complete verse runs: *And he who desires the hereafter and strives for it with the effort necessary, being a believer; for such, their effort finds favor (with their Lord).* (Q. 17:19)

[1060] "effort" (*saʿy*): This is the same word that is used for the running between the hills of Safa and Marwah during the Greater and Lesser Pilgrimages.

their reception (of him). Whosoever's pleasure is derived from people will not reach God.

As for FOLLOWING PRECEDENT, it is a veil because if one believes in someone's school of law and hears its words in the way of argument, one gives no place to anything else in his heart. One must forget that and believe in the meaning of *There is no god but God and* that one must seek the fulfillment of that in oneself. The fulfillment of that is that one has no object of worship that he obeys except God Most High. Whoever is overcome by passion, that passion is one's object of worship. When this state becomes (one's) true nature, one must seek the discovery of affairs by earnest striving, not by argument.

As for SIN, it is the greatest veil. The soul of whoever perseveres in sin is dark. How can God be revealed to him? Especially (the consumption of) forbidden food, for it annihilates the effect that lawful food makes in illuminating the soul. In reality, one must beware of the forbidden morsel and consume only lawful food.[1061] Anyone who wishes that the mysteries of religion and the Religious Law be unveiled to him before he observes and implements the externals of the Law in dealings is like the person who wishes to read the commentaries on the Quran before he has learned Arabic.

[THE GUIDE OF THE WAY]

When these veils have been pulled away, (one's) similitude is that of the person who has performed the obligatory purification and is prepared to perform the (obligatory) formal prayer. Now, he needs an imam to lead him (in performing the prayer). That is the spiritual guide (*pīr*), for without a spiritual guide, traveling the path will not be direct. The path to God is hidden and mixed with the paths of Satan. The path to God is one, but there are a thousand paths to the false. How will it be possible to travel that (one) path without a guide? When one has found his spiritual guide, he must put all of his affairs in (the guide's) hands and set aside control over himself. He must know that his profit in the spiritual guide's error will be greater than in his own correctness. Whatever he hears from the spiritual guide that he does not understand should remind him of the story of Moses and Khidr[1062] (A). That story is for the spiritual guide and his disciple, for the shaykhs know things which the mind (of the disciple) cannot entertain.

[1061] Of course, Ghazzali is not only referring to forbidden foods and drinks such as pork and alcohol, but also food and drink which has been obtained unlawfully through extortion, oppression, overcharging, and the like.

[1062] "the story of Moses and Khidr": See Note 902 on Khidr.

In the time of Galen,[1063] someone developed a pain in a finger of his right hand. Physicians of insufficient knowledge applied medicine to that finger, but there was no improvement. Galen applied some medicine to (the man's) left shoulder. They said: "What kind of nonsense is this? The pain is here and the medicine is there! What use is that?" The finger got better. The reason was that (Galen) knew that the defect had occurred in the main nerve, and he knew that nerves spring from the brain and the spine, and that which comes from the left goes to the right, and that which comes from the right goes to the left. The point of this example is that it be known that no control must remain within the disciple.

I heard about Khwajah Abu 'Ali Farmudhi[1064] (R) that he said: "Once I was recounting a dream to my shaykh, Abu al-Qasim Gurgani[1065] (R) who was my spiritual guide. He grew angry and did not speak to me for a month. I did not know any cause for that until the time he said: 'During the telling of the story of the dream thou saidst: "Thou, who art a shaykh, spoke to me thus in a dream. (In the dream), I asked thee: 'Why?'"' He said: 'If inside thee there had been no room for "Why?" thou wouldst not have uttered it in a dream.'"

Therefore, when the affair is entrusted to the spiritual guide, the first act of the spiritual guide is to place one in a fortress so that evils do not circle around him. That fortress has four walls: one is seclusion, another is silence, another is hunger, and another is wakefulness. Hunger closes the way of Satan, sleeping little illuminates the soul, silence keeps the soul from the distraction of talk, and seclusion turns away the darkness of people from him and closes the way to the eyes and ears. Sahl Tustari (R) says: "The saints who have become saints became so by seclusion, hunger, silence, and wakefulness."

When one has arisen out of the path of preoccupation, one starts to travel on the path. The beginning of the path is that one start to overcome the first obstacles of the path. The obstacles of the path are the blameworthy qualities in the soul. They are the root of the things from which one must flee—such as the greed for wealth and rank, the greed for comfort, haughtiness, hypocrisy, and the like—until the materials of distraction are cut off from within and the soul is empty (of them). It may happen that a person be emptied of all of these until he is not polluted by more than one (blameworthy quality). Then he must strive to sever that one by the means that the shaykh approves and considers more suited (to him), for these vary with conditions.

[1063] Galen: see Note 985 above.

[1064] Khwājah Abū ᶜAlī Fārmudhī: Mentioned in *Tadhkirat al-Awliya* and *Kashf al-Mahjub*. In the latter, he is lauded as a disciple and the pious successor of Abū al-Qāsim bin ᶜAlī bin ᶜAbdullāh al-Gurgānī in Sufism. This would make him active sometime in the 4th Islamic (10th CE) century, or slightly later.

[1065] Abu al-Qasim Gurgani: See Note 915 on Khwajah Abu al-Qasim Gurgani.

Now that he has cleared the field, the sowing of seed begins. The seed is the remembrance of God Most High, since he has been emptied of all save Him. Then he sits in seclusion and continually recites *Allāh, Allāh* in his soul and with his tongue until the time when the tongue falls silent and the soul begins to speak. Then the soul, too, ceases to speak and the meaning of the word overwhelms the soul. The significance is not in the letters.[1066] It is not Arabic or Persian, for speaking with the soul is also speech. Speech is the sheathe and the husk of the seed, not the seed itself. Then, the import of that must become firmly established in the soul, dominating and victorious, so that the soul not be forced to that (state). Rather, it should become like a lover from which the soul cannot be held back by force. Shibli[1067] said to his disciple, Husri:[1068] "If from Friday to Friday when thou comest to me, thou lettest anything pass in thy soul other than God Most High, thy coming to me will be unlawful."

So, when the soul has been cleared of the thorns of worldly temptations and the seeds have been planted, nothing still remains that is related to free choice. (The soul) has chosen to be there (in that condition). After that, one remains waiting for what will grow and appear. Usually the seed is not wasted, for God Most High says: *Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We give him increase in his harvest.* (Q. 42:20) He says: "Whoever cultivates the work of the Hereafter and sows the seed, We shall bestow increase upon him."

From this point, the conditions of disciples are various: There is the person to whom the meaning of the word begins to appear plainly, but spurious imaginings come to him. There is the person who is delivered from these, but the essence of the angels and the spirits of the prophets begin to appear to him in beautiful forms, as though he were dreaming. He opens his eyes and still sees them. After that, there are other states, the discussion of which would be lengthy. There is no benefit in relating them because the way is for traveling, not speaking. Each person has a different experience. For whoever desires to travel that path, it is better than he not have heard anything about it, so that expectation not occupy his soul and (itself) become a veil.

That amount which may be learned through study is up to this point. The purpose of this discourse is that belief in (such a state) may

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[1066] "letters" (*ḥurūf*): or, "words."

[1067] Shibli: Abū Bakr Dulaf bin Jahdār al-Shiblī, a great Sufi. A provincial governor, he abandoned the world at the age of 40. Of Khorasani origin, he was born in Samarra in Iraq, and died at Baghdad AH334/946CE.

[1068] Ḥusrī: Abū Saʿīd al-Sūfī, a Muʿtazilite, who lived in the first part of the 10th century. Of several men by the name of al-Husri, he is the most likely to be the one mentioned by Ghazzali. Qushayri mentions another Husri, Abū ʿAbdullāh Ḥusrī, but he was an associate of Fath Mawsili (see Note 843), about a century earlier than Shibli. (See preceding note.)

appear, for most of the religious scholars deny it and do not believe anything that surpasses ordinary learning.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCERNING THE OBSTACLES ON THE PATH OF RELIGION: THE APPETITES OF THE STOMACH AND THE GENITALIA

Know that the belly is the tank of the body, and the vessels coming out of it to the seven members are like channels (of irrigation). The source of all appetites is the belly. This is the most common appetite that befalls a descendant of Adam, for Adam fell out of heaven because of it. Then, this appetite is the origin of all other appetites, for when the belly is replete, the appetite for sexual intercourse begins to become active. The appetites of the belly and the genitals cannot be addressed without money; hence, the greed for wealth appears. Wealth cannot be obtained except with rank and retinue, so the greed for rank appears. Wealth and rank cannot be preserved except by antagonizing people. From this envy, bigotry, enmity, pride, dissimulation, hatred, and dispute all appear.

[The Remedy for the Appetite of the Stomach]

Therefore, giving free rein to the stomach is the source of all sins, while controlling the belly and accustoming oneself to hunger is the source of all good.

In this chapter, we shall (first) discuss the virtue of hunger, then we shall speak of the benefits of hunger. Then, we shall explain the manner of self-discipline in eating little. Then, we shall describe the different circumstances of people with respect to that. Then, we shall discuss the great harm of dissimulation in eating little. Then, we shall discuss the great harm of the lusts of the genitalia and the spiritual reward for a person who guards against them.

Disclosing the Virtue and Spiritual Reward of Hunger

The Messenger (S) said: "Strive against your selves with hunger and thirst, for the spiritual reward of that is like the spiritual reward of striving in battle against the unbelievers. There is no behavior more pleasing to God Most High than hunger and thirst." And he (S) said: "Whoever fills his stomach will not be admitted to the heavenly kingdom." The Messenger was asked: "Who is the most superior person?" He (S) replied: "He who eats little, laughs little, and is content with breeches."[1069] And he (S) said: "The lord and the senior of all acts is

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[1069] breeches: literally, "covering the privates" (*ʿawrat-pūsh*). The absolute minimum of clothing (for a male).

hunger." And he (S) said: "Wear clothing. Eat and drink until the belly is half-full, for that is a portion of prophethood." And he (S) said: "Reflection is one half of worship; eating sparingly is the other half of worship." And he said: "The most virtuous of you to God Most High is (the person) whose meditation and hunger are lengthy. The most inimical of you to God Most High is (the person) who eats much, drinks much water, and sleeps much." And he said: "God Most High boasts to the angels of the person who eats little, saying: 'Look! I have afflicted him with the appetite for food and he withholds (from it) for My sake. Bear witness, O angels! For every bite that he has passed up, I shall give him a degree in heaven." And he (S) said: "Deaden not your souls with quantities of food and drink, for the soul is like a sown field; if it is over-watered, (the plants) will die." And he (S) said: "A man fills no container full worse than the stomach. A few bites will suffice for a person to keep his back straight. If there is no remedy, then one third of the stomach is for food, one third for drink, and one third for breath." According to another version: "One third for remembrance."

Jesus (A) said: "Keep yourselves hungry and naked so that it may be that your souls will see God."

Our Messenger (S) said: "Satan flows inside the body of a person like blood in the veins. Make his passage difficult with hunger." And he (S) said: "The believer eats with one intestine; the hypocrite with seven." This means that the carnal appetite and eating of the hypocrite is seven times that of the believer.

'Ayishah (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "'Continually knock on the door of heaven until your door is opened.' I asked: 'O Messenger of God! With what shall I knock?' He said: 'Hunger and thirst.'" Abu Juhayfah[1070] belched in the presence of the Messenger (S). He said: "Keep thy belch at a distance, for whoever is more sated in this world will be more hungry in the next."

'Ayishah (R) says: "The Messenger (S) never sated himself with food. I used to feel compassion for him because of (his) hunger. I would lay my hand on his stomach and say: 'My body is thy sacrifice! What will happen if thou eatest enough of this world not be hungry?' He said: 'O 'Ayishah! The prophets of highest resolve, my brethren[1071] who have preceded me, have obtained grace from God Most High. I fear that if I enjoy comfort and ease, my degree will be less than their degree. I prefer being patient with little for a few days to having my delight less in the Hereafter. Nothing is dearer to me that reaching my brethren." 'Ayishah (R) says: "By God and His Messenger! He did not live more than a week after (saying) that."

[1070] Abū Juḥayfah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1071] "brethren": that is, the prophets and messengers.

Fatimah (R), holding a piece of bread in her hand, went to the Messenger (S). He asked: "What is that?" She replied: "A loaf of bread that I baked that I could not eat without thee." He said: "This is the first food that will enter thy father's mouth in three days." Abu Hurayrah (R) says: "They never ate bread made of wheat for three days together during the time of the Messenger (S)."

Abu Sulayman Darani (R) says: "I prefer to eat one morsel less of the evening meal than to perform formal prayer throughout the night until morning." Fudayl[1072] (R) used to say to himself: "What art thou afraid of? Art thou afraid that thou will remain hungry? What an idea, that God Most High would give hunger to Muhammad, his Companions, and withhold it from thee and the likes of thee!" Kahmas[1073] (R) said: "O Lord God! Thou keepest me hungry and naked. Thou keepest me with Thyself long nights in seclusion. How have I achieved this station with Thee? For Thou doest this with Thine Own friends."

Malik Dinar said: "Blessed is the person who possesses enough grain to suffice his needs and to be independent of people." Muhammad Wasi'[1074] (R) said: "No! Blessed is the person who is hungry in the morning and hungry in the evening and with whom God Most High is pleased."

Sahl Tustari said: "The saints and the wise have searched and found nothing more beneficial in religion and the world than hunger and found nothing more harmful to the Hereafter than satiety." 'Abd al-Wahid Zayd[1075] said: "God Most High has not befriended any person except by means of hunger. No one has walked upon water except by means of hunger. No one has rolled up the earth so as to travel a hundred parasangs[1076] in a night except by means of hunger. In the Traditions, it is related that Moses (A), during those forty days when God Most High wished to talk with him, ate nothing.

Disclosing the Benefits of Hunger and the Afflictions of Satiety

Know that the merit of hunger does not lie in that there be anguish, just as the merit of medicine does not lie in its bitterness. However, in hunger there are ten benefits:

[1072] Fudayl: Fudayl 'Iyad, see Note 670.

[1073] Kahmas: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1074] Muhammad Wasi': Muhammad bin Wasi', see Note 669.

[1075] 'Abd al-Wahid Zayd: 'Abd al-Wāhid bin Ziyād, Abū 'Ubaydah, a disciple of Hasan al-Basri (see Note 398) who began as a vendor of palm leaves and became an important preacher and ascetic. He died AH128-9/745C E.

[1076] A hundred parasangs: approximately 300 miles.

THE FIRST BENEFIT is that it purifies and illuminates the soul, while satiety blinds people's souls and makes them dull of thought. A vapor moves from the gut to the brain which stupefies people so as to confuse thought. Concerning this, the Messenger (S) said: "Enliven your souls by laughing little. Cleanse (them) with hunger so until they become finely pure." And he (S) said: "Whoever keeps himself hungry becomes astute and his thoughts become great." Shibli (R) said: "There was never a day when I sat hungry for the sake of God that I did not receive some new wisdom or lesson in my soul." The Messenger (S) said: "Do not sate yourselves with food, for the light of spiritual knowledge will be extinguished in your souls." Then, since spiritual knowledge is the way to Paradise and hunger is the threshold of spiritual knowledge, being hungry is knocking on the door of heaven, as he (S) said: *"Continue the knocking at the door of Paradise with hunger."*

THE SECOND BENEFIT is that the soul becomes refined so that it finds pleasure in the remembrance (of God) and conversation (with God). Harshness and hardness of the soul arise from satiety so that every remembrance made is made with the tongue and does not enter the soul. Junayd (R) says: "Each one of you has placed a feed bag crammed with victuals between yourself and God Most High. Then, ye want to find the pleasure of conversation (with God)! This will never happen."

THE THIRD BENEFIT is that while arrogance and negligence are the gates of hell; humility, helplessness, and weakness are the thresholds of heaven. Satiety brings arrogance and heedlessness, while hunger brings weakness and humility. So long as the servant does not look at himself with the eye of weakness—by missing one bite, the world becomes straitened and dark for him—he will not see the majesty and power of God. It was for this that key to the treasures of the world was offered to the Messenger (S) and he said: "I do not want it, but for a day of satiety and a day of hunger. When I become hungry, I am patient and when I am sated, I give thanks."

THE FOURTH BENEFIT is that when one is sated, one forgets the hungry and feels no compassion for God's people. One forgets the punishment of the Hereafter. But, when one is hungry, one recalls the people of hell. When one is thirsty, one recalls the thirst of the people of the Resurrection. Fear of the Hereafter and compassion for mankind are among the thresholds of heaven. It was for this that it was said to Joseph (A): "Thou possessest the treasure of the world. Why dost thou remain hungry?" He said: "I fear that if I eat my fill, I shall forget the hungry poor."

THE FIFTH BENEFIT is that which is at the head of all benefits and (spiritual) happinesses. It is that one keep one's own self under one's own control. Wretchedness is that one be under the control of the self. Just as a stubborn animal cannot be tamed and softened except by hunger, the human self is the same. This is not just one benefit; it is the alchemy of benefits. For, all sins arise from the carnal appetites and all carnal appetites arise from satiety.

Dhu al-Nun ® says: "I never ate my fill. I have not sinned, nor have I intended to sin." 'Ayishah (R) says: "The first innovation that appeared after the Messenger (S) was satiating oneself. Because the people eat their fill, their selves have begun to be recalcitrant."

If there were no benefit due to hunger save that the appetite of the genitalia would be weakened and the appetite for (idle) talk would depart, that would be sufficient! For everyone who eats to satiety becomes engaged in gossiping and slandering and is overpowered by the craving of the genitalia. If one controls the genitalia, one controls the eye. If one controls the eye, one controls the speculation of the soul. Hunger suffices for all of these. It is for this that it was said: "Hunger is a jewel in the treasury of God Most High. He gives it to those who love Him, but He does not give it to everyone." One of the learned has said: "God Most High removes the thought of women from the soul of every disciple who eats dry bread for a year and eats half of that (amount) to which he is accustomed."

THE SIXTH BENEFIT is sleeping less. This is the basis of all acts of worship, the conversation (with God), the remembrance (of God), and reflection, especially at night. Anyone who eats to satiety is overcome by sleep and falls like a corpse; his life is wasted. Every night a spiritual guide used to announce at the dining cloth: "O disciples! Eat ye not too much of bread, for then ye will drink too much water, and then ye will sleep too much. Then ye will experience much grief at the Resurrection." Seventy truly righteous people (R) are in agreement that over-sleeping comes from drinking too much water. Since the capital of a human being is his life and every breath a substance by which he may net the happiness of the Hereafter, and (excessive) sleep is injurious to life and wastes it, what thing could be more precious than the fending off of sleep? Whoever spends the night in worship and prayer while sated does not experience the pleasure of conversation (with God). Sleep overcomes (him) and nocturnal pollution may occur. He (may not) be able to perform the greater purification at night, and he remains in an impure state, cannot participate in worship, and is obliged to take the trouble of the greater purification. It may be that he does not have any money (for the bathhouse). It may be that his eyes fall on the privates of someone; many troubles are born from (overeating). Abu Sulayman Darani says:

"Nocturnal pollution is a punishment." That is because it is the effect of satiety.

THE SEVENTH BENEFIT is that time becomes ample for one and one may attend to work and learning. Should one eat a lot, he will spend all of his time in eating, cooking, sleeping, buying, preparing, and waiting for the means. Then he will spend time in going to the privy and moving his bowels.[1077] Every breath is a jewel and it is the capital of human being. Wasting it unnecessarily is foolishness.

Sari Saqati said: "I saw 'Ali Gurgani[1078] throwing barley meal into his mouth. I asked: 'Why dost thou not eat bread?' He said: 'Between this and my eating bread there is a difference of seventy glorifications of God and I do not waste time. For this reason, I have not eaten bread for forty years, so that I would not have to chew it and not lose this benefit.'" There is no doubt that fasting is easier for whoever is accustomed to hunger. He can stay in retreat in the mosque and always remain in a state of purification. Such benefits are not dismissed lightly by those who are engaged in the business of the Hereafter.

Abu Sulayman Darani says: "Six things occur to whoever eats his fill: he does not obtain the sweetness of worship; his memory for learning wisdom grows dull; he is deprived of the compassion for others, for he supposes that everyone else is as sated as he is; worship becomes troublesome for him; his carnal appetites are increased; and, while believers are going around the mosques, he is going around privies and dung heaps."

THE EIGHTH BENEFIT is that whoever eats sparingly is always healthy and is delivered from the torment of illness, the provision of medicine, the mincing of doctors, the pain of cupping, and the taking of bitter medicine. The learned and the physicians are in agreement that there is nothing in which there is all benefit and no harm except in eating sparingly. One of the wise has said: "The best thing which a person eats is the pomegranate and the worse is jerked meat; but eating a little jerky is better than eating too many pomegranates." In the Traditions, it is related: "Keep the fast so as to be healthy."

THE NINTH BENEFIT is that, for whoever eats sparingly, there is little expense and he does not become in need of much wealth. All

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[1077] "moving his bowels": Ghazzali employs a euphemism—*tahārat kardan*—for this which means "purifying or cleaning (oneself)." A privy is called a *tahārat-jāy* (place of cleaning), so the intent is quite clear.

[1078] 'Ali Gurgani: An ascetic of the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century. In *Tadhkirat al-Awliya*, there is an anecdote about Bishr Hafi's meeting with him at a spring in which Bishr asked him for counsel.

calamities, sins, and distractions of the soul arise from the need for much wealth. If one must eat a great quantity of something delicious on a daily basis, one will be put to much trouble to obtain it every day and one may fall into the doubtful[1079] and the craving for the forbidden. A sage says: "I arrange for most of my needs by abandoning them. That is easier for me." Another says: "When I would borrow from someone, I borrow from my stomach and abandon the desire for that thing." Ibrahim Adham used to ask the price of something. They would say: "It is expensive." Then he would say: "Make it cheap by abandoning it."

THE TENTH BENEFIT is that when one has mastered one's stomach, one masters the giving of voluntary charity, giving in abundance, and being generous. For, the place of whatever enters the stomach is foul, while the place of whatever is given in charity is the pure treasury of God Most High. The Messenger (S) looked at someone who had a fat belly and said: "If thou hadst put that which thou hast put in that place in another place, it would have been better for thee." That is, in voluntary charity for the sake of God Most High.

DISCLOSING THE RULES OF CONDUCT OF THE DISCIPLE IN EATING FOOD SPARINGLY AND EATING AT THE PROPER TIME

Know that it is a religious obligation for the disciple to observe three cautions concerning food, beyond that it be (simply) lawful:

THE FIRST CAUTION is to eat little. It is not possible to go from eating a lot to eating a little in one moment. One does not have the strength to endure that and it is harmful. Rather, it should be done by degrees. For example, if one wishes to decrease one's food by one loaf of bread,[1080] one must decrease it by one bite the first day, two bites the next, three bites the day after, until in the period of a month one refrains from one loaf of bread. When it is done this way, it is easy and one is not aware of the decrease and one's nature will adjust to it.

Then the amount that one will settle upon has four degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is the most important: it is the degree of the truly righteous. It is that one be content with the necessary amount. This was the choice of Sahl Tustari (R) who has said: "Worship is with life, intellect, and strength. Do not eat food until thou fear a loss of strength. Performing the formal prayer in a sitting posture out of weakness is better than performing it standing with a full stomach. However, if thou

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[1079] "doubtful": A doubt as to the lawfulness of the food.

[1080] One should not imagine the large loafs of bread common in the markets of our day. Ghazzali is talking about a loaf of bread more on the order of what is called today pita bread.

fear that some harm will befall thy life or intellect, thou must eat, for one cannot serve (God) without intellect, and thy life is itself the foundation (of all else)." He was asked: "How didst thou use to eat?" He answered: "I would spend three dirhams a year. I would get one dirham's worth of rice flour, one dirham's worth of honey, and one dirham's worth of oil. I would mix the three together and divide (the mixture) into three hundred and sixty portions. Each evening I would break my fast with one portion of that." They asked: "Now how dost thou eat?" He said: "As it happens." Amongst the monks, there are those who eat no more than a dram's weight of food. They have accustomed themselves to this gradually.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one limit oneself to half a *mudd*.[1081] This is about one and one third (loaves of) bread, of that bread which is quarter of a *mann*. Indeed, that (fills) one third of a stomach, as the Messenger (S) said: *"A third for food, a third for drink, and a third for remembrance (of God)."* According to another narration: *"A third for breath.* This is what the Messenger (S) said: "A few bites are sufficient." And this is less than ten bites. 'Umar (R) used not to eat more than seven or nine bites.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one limit oneself to a *mudd*. That is about three pones.[1082] Indeed, it is in fact more. It fills more than a third of the stomach and reaches a half.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is a whole *mann*. It is possible that anything over a *mann* is extravagance and in opposition to that verse in the Quran which says: *And be not extravagant; lo! God does not love the extravagant*, (Q. 6:141) but this changes according to the time, the body, and the work. In sum, one should stop eating when one is still hungry. Some have not established fixed amounts, but have endeavored not to eat unless they are hungry and to stop when a portion of the hunger still remains. The sign of hunger is that one be eager for bread without sauce or stew and that one can eat all bread made of barley or millet eagerly. When one looks for stew, the hunger is no longer genuine. Most of the Companions did not exceed half a *mudd*. There were some whose food was one *sa'*[1083]— a *sa'* is four *mudd*s—and when they were eating dates, a *sa'* and a half, because of the date stones which are discarded.

Abu Dharr (R) said: "My food was a *sa'* of barley from Friday to Friday during the time of the Messenger (S). By God, I will not exceed that until the time I come to him." He reviled some, saying: "Ye have deviated from that." The Messenger (S) had said: "The most beloved and closest to me is the person who dies holding to that which there is

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[1081] *mudd*: A dry measure variously given. As much as the extended hands of a full-grown man can hold.

[1082] "pones": round cakes or loaves.

[1083] *sa'* (*ṣāʿ*): a variable cubic measure; here probably four *mudd* or five pints. (Steingass)

today." That which Abu Dharr used to say: "Ye have deviated in that ye have made sifted barley flour and have baked soft bread and also eat it with a stew. Ye have made your night garment different from your day garment—but during (the Messenger's time this was not the way. The food of the People of the Bench was one *mudd* of dates for two persons, and they discarded (the date stones from that)."

Sahl Tustari (R) says: "If all the world is flooded with blood, the food of the believers from that would be lawful."[1084] That means that one not eat except what is necessary; not that which the Libertines continually say, that when the unlawful reaches a believer it becomes lawful, for one date from the contributions of voluntary charity came to the Messenger (S), but it did not become lawful.[1085]

THE SECOND CAUTION concerns the time of eating. This has three degrees:[1086]

THE GREATEST (DEGREE) is that one not eat anything for three or more days. There have been persons who (did not eat) for seven days and more. Ten or twelve of the Followers[1087] achieved a degree in which they ate positively nothing for forty days. Ibrahim Adham (R) and Sufyan Thawri (R) used to eat once every three days. It is said that something of the wonders of the (heavenly) kingdom would certainly become revealed in whoever did not eat anything for forty days. A Sufi was debating a monk and asked: "Why dost thou not have faith in Muhammad (S)?" (The monk) said: "Because Jesus (A) did not eat anything for forty days, and no one other than a righteous prophet can do that. And your prophet has not done that." The Sufi said: "I am one of his nation. If I remain for forty days and eat nothing, wilt thou believe in him?" "He said: "I shall." The Sufi remained for fifty days. (The monk) said: "Wilt thou do more?" He said: "Yes," and finished sixty days without eating anything. That monk came to believe (in Islam). This is a tremendous degree that cannot be attained by perseverance, except by the person to whom some matter has appeared from beyond this world so that food preserves him and keeps him occupied while he is not aware of it.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one not eat for two or three days. It is possible to do this often.

THE THIRD DEGREE is to eat once a day, and this is the least degree. If it is twice, it reaches extravagance and one will never be

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[1084] Consuming blood is prohibited in Islam. See Q. 2:173. However, as Sahl says, the unlawful may be consumed in dire necessity.

[1085] That is, he did not take it because he did not regard it as lawful for himself.

[1086] Following the AA text. HK has the word "too" (*nīz*) in this sentence, but since the preceding caution had four degrees, and this one has three, the *nīz* would appear to be inappropriate; except perhaps in the sense: "This, too, has degrees (and there are) three."

[1087] Followers: the generation following the Companions of the Prophet.

hungry. When the Messenger (S) would eat at early morning, he would not eat at night. When he would eat at night, he would not eat in the morning. The Messenger (S) said to 'Ayishah (R): "Be careful that thou art not extravagant." Eating twice in one day was extravagance. If one wishes to eat once, it is better that one eat in the pre-dawn so that one would be light at the evening obligatory formal prayer and the soul would be pure. If it is the case that one turns one's attention to food, one may eat once at the time of breaking the fast and once at the pre-dawn.

THE THIRD CAUTION is with respect to the kind of food, and the finest is sifted wheat while the least is unsifted barley; the median is sifted barley. The best accompanying dish is meat and sweetmeats, the least is vinegar and salt; the median is gruel with oil. The custom of those who have tread the path of the Hereafter is to refrain from the accompanying dish. In whatever craving for that they have seen in themselves, they have opposed the self. They have said that when the self satisfies its own appetite, pride, heedlessness, and darkness appear. Being in the world is preferred and death becomes an enemy. One must restrict one's self in the world so that (the world) becomes its prison and death its liberation from the prison. In the Traditions, it is related: "The worst of people are those who eat husked wheat." This is not forbidden; eating it from time to time is permitted. However, if one makes a habit of it, ease will overpower one's nature leading—it is feared—to pride and negligence. [The Messenger (S)] said: "The worst of my people are those whose bodies have been planted upon the comforts of the world. All of their aspirations are for different kinds of food and different kinds of clothing. Then, they declaim long and lavish speeches."

A revelation came to Moses (A): "O Moses, know that thy residence is the grave. Thou must restrain thy body from too many carnal appetites." No one for whom all the means of comfort have been provided and whose every whim has been facilitated has been highly regarded.

Wahb Munabbih (R) says: "In the fourth heaven two angels met together. One said: 'I am going to catch a fish in a net because such-and-such a Jew has hoped for fish.' The other angel said: 'I am going to spill a cup of oil because such-and-such a devotee has hoped for oil and it was brought to him.'" A goblet of cold water sweetened with honey was brought to 'Umar. He did not drink it and said: "I prefer that ye keep the accounting for that away from me."

Ibn 'Umar (R) was ill. He expressed a desire for grilled fish. Nafi'[1088] said: "I could not find a fish in the Madinah except with a lot of effort. I bought a fish for one and a half dirhams. I grilled it and brought

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[1088] Nafi': a freed slave who once belonged to the Prophet.

it to him. A poor man came to the door of the residence and (Ibn 'Umar) said: 'Take this and give it to him.' I said: 'This is what thou didst desire and I have obtained with a great deal of effort. Let me give him its price.' He said: 'No, give the fish to him." I gave it to (the poor man) and followed him and bought it back from him. When I returned, I brought it to (Ibn 'Umar) again and said: 'I gave him the price for it.' He said: 'Go back and give him the fish and let him keep the money thou gavest him. I have heard the Messenger (S) say: "Whoever desires something, buys it, and then abstains from it for the sake of God Most will be forgiven."'"

'Utbah al-Ghulam (R) would place dough in the sun until it was dry, then he would eat it. He would not bake it so as not to taste its goodness. He would take water from out in the sun and drink it warm, as it was. Malik Dinar (R) desired milk for forty years, but did not drink it. Someone brought fresh dates to him. He turned them over in his hands a lot, then said to his companions: "Ye eat them for I have not eaten any for forty years."

Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawari[1089] (R) was the disciple of Abu Sulayman Darani (R). (Ahmad) said: "He used to wish for hot bread so as to eat it with salt. I brought it. He took one bite than put it aside and began to weep. He said: 'O Lord God, Thou hast placed my desire before me, but wilt Thou punish me? I have repented, forgive me.'" Malik bin Daygham[1090] (R) said: "I was walking through the market of Basrah. I saw very fine leeks. The appetite for them leaped inside me. I swore an oath not to eat them until that time when I reach God."

Malik Dinar (R) said: "It has been fifty years since I have divorced myself from the world in the desire for a single draught of milk. I have not drunk that and I shall not drink it until that time when I reach God." Hammad[1091] (R) says: "I arrived at the door of Dawud Tayi and heard his voice. He was saying: 'Once thou didst desire a carrot and I gave it to thee. Now thou wantest dates? Thou will never get them and never eat them!' When I entered I did not see anyone with him and I realized that he had been talking to his own body."

'Utbah al-Ghulam said to 'Abd al-Wahid bin Zayd: "So-and-so describes a state of his soul which I do not possess." He said: "Because he eats just dry bread and thou eatest dates." ('Utbah) asked: "If I stop, shall I reach that degree?" ('Abd al-Wahid) answered: "Thou wilt." ('Utbah) said: "I shall stop." Then he wept and he was asked: "Art thou weeping because of the dates?" 'Abd al-Wahid said: "His self loves dates and has learned ('Utbah's) intention not to eat them again and it is weeping for that."

[1089] Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawari: Ahmad bin al-Hawārī, see Note 573.

[1090] Mālik bin Daygham: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1091] Hammād bin Sulayman: a Traditionist mentioned by Ibn Qutaybah in *Al-Ma'arif*.

Abu Bakr Jala' (R) says: "I know someone whose self desires something. It is always saying: 'I shall be patient for ten days, but give me (something) today.' The person says: 'I do not want thee not to eat for ten days. Abandon that appetite.'"

This is the path of the wayfarers and saints. If a person does not achieve that degree, well, the least he can do is to abandon some of his carnal appetites. He may sacrifice and not eat meat continually, for 'Ali (R) says: "The heart of the person who eats meat continuously for forty days becomes hard. The heart of whoever does not eat it for forty consecutive days becomes gentle." Moderation is that which 'Umar (R) said to his son: "One time meat, one time oil, one time milk, one time vinegar, and one time dry bread."

It is recommended that one not go to sleep with a full stomach, which has joined together two heedlessnesses.[1092] It is related in the Traditions: "Employ oneself in formal prayer and the remembrance (of God) and pass up food. Do not oversleep for it blackens the soul." And it has been said: "After eating, one should perform four bows of formal prayer and recite the glorification one hundred times, or read a section of the Quran so as to obviate the harm of the food."

Sufyan Thawri (R) would stay awake all night when he had eaten his fill and would say: "Now that the beast of burden has been sated, one must make it do some hard work." One of the saints (R) said to his disciples: "Do not consume your desires and do not go after them. If ye consume them, do not seek them; if ye do, do not like them."

Disclosing the Inner Secret of This Striving and the Difference Between the Rule of the Spiritual Guide and Disciple Concerning This

Know that the object of hunger is the breaking of the self, bringing it under control, and correcting it. When it is upright, these measures are not necessary. It is for this reason that while the spiritual guide commands all of this for the disciple, he himself does not do it. The object is not pain and hunger. Rather, the object is that one eat that amount which neither makes his stomach heavy nor leaves the feeling of hunger. Both of these distract one from worship. The perfection in this lies in partaking of the attributes of the angels: they experience neither the pain of hunger nor the heaviness of repletion with food. However, the self does not obtain this balance except by applying force to it in the beginning.

At that time, there was a party of the great who always suspected themselves (in this regard). They chose the way of prudence and always

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[1092] "two heedlessnesses": that is, sleep and satiety.

maintained (this use of force upon their selves). Those who were more complete stopped at moderation. The proof of this is that the Messenger (S) sometimes used to fast until they would say: "He will never break it." Sometimes he would not fast until they would say: "He will never fast." When he would look for something in the house, if there were something, he would eat it, if there were not, he would say: "I am fasting." He used to like honey and he used to like meat.

They used to bring Ma'ruf Karkhi (R) delicious food and he would eat it, but Bishr Hafi would not. Ma'ruf (R) was asked about this state of affairs. He said: "My brother Bishr Hafi has been seized by piety and caution, while spiritual insight has been opened to me. I am a guest in the palace of Lord. When He gives, I eat, and when He does not, I am patient. No control remains with me, nor any opposition."

But here there is the delusion of the fools: whoever does not have the strength to oppose his self declares: "I am a mystic like Ma'ruf Karkhi." Therefore, one should not leave off striving, except two persons: either the truly righteous person who is firm in rectitude, or the fool who supposes himself to be firm in rectitude. Ma'ruf Karkhi's control was total, because if someone was treacherous to him, either by deed or by word, no anger moved inside him and he would consider it to be from God, as though the words (of slander) about him were correct. However, since Bishr Hafi, Sari Saqati, Malik Dinar (R) and persons of this class did not have faith in their selves, they did not cease from striving against them. It is absurd that anyone of the people of this era think that about their selves. *Peace!*

Disclosing the Harm of Checking the Appetites

Know that from this two harms are born: one is that a person is not able to (control) some appetites and does not want that to be known. When alone, he eats and when in public, he does not eat. This is the essence of hypocrisy. It may be that Satan will deceive him: "This is in the interest of the people so that they will follow thee." This is pure self-delusion. And, there is the person who purchases his desire and takes it home so that it may not be seen. He is able not to eat it, so he does not eat it and gives it away as voluntary charity. This is the extremity of sincerity and the act of the truly righteous. This is a tremendous hardship on the self. The requirement of liberation is that (such acts) become easy. If they are difficult, there is still some dissimulation hidden in the soul. It has the devotion of hypocrisy, not the devotion to God. Whoever flies from the craving for food and falls into the craving for dissimulation is as though he avoids the rain but sits under the waterspout. Therefore, when one discovers this demand in one's self, satisfy that craving in public by eating just a little and not a lot, so that both the hypocrisy and the appetite may be vanquished.

[SEXUAL APPETITE][1093]

DISCLOSING THE APPETITE OF THE GENITALIA

Know that the appetite for sexual intercourse has been made dominant over a person to demand of him that he spread his seed so that progeny will not be cut off, and (also) as a foretaste of the pleasure of Paradise, but the detriment of this appetite is enormous. Iblis said to Moses (A): "Do not sit with any woman in private, for no man is alone with a woman without my being his companion in order to turn him towards temptation."

Sa'id Musayyab[1094] (R) says: "God Most High did not send any messenger but that Iblis was not without hope for him by cause of women. I myself fear nothing more than that. For that reason, I go nowhere except to my own house and the house of my daughter."

Know that in that appetite there are also excess, renunciation, and moderation. Excess is that one not recoil from the indecent and to devote oneself to that. When things are thus, it is a duty to break it with fasting. If it is not broken, then one should marry. Renunciation is that sexual appetite be banished entirely; this is a deficiency. Moderation is that there be carnal appetite, but it is under control. There is the person who eats various things to increase his carnal appetite: this is out of ignorance. He is like the person who disturbs a beehive so that they will sting him—except for the person who marries and his object is the keeping of the equality among women, for men are their protection.

One of the curiosities of the Traditions is that the Messenger (S) said: "I found a weakness of (sexual) appetite in myself. Gabriel (A) ordered thick wheaten porridge." The reason for this was that he had nine wives and they were forbidden to all the people of the world and their hope from all of the world had been severed.

One of the problems of this appetite is ardent love.[1095] Many sins are committed because of it. If one is not cautious at the beginning, it goes out of control. Caution lies in not looking. If by chance the eye falls upon something, it is easy to avoid looking the next time. However, if one gives (the eye) free rein, then stopping it will be difficult. The similitude of the self in this is the beast of burden that first heads for a place. Turning it away is easy. But if it slips past, seizing it by the tail and dragging it out is difficult. So, the main thing is to guard the eyes.

[1093] This title is bracketed in HK's text, but it is not found in AA's edition. In any event, it marks the change of subject from the appetites of the belly to those of the genitalia.

[1094] Sa'id Musayyab (Abū Muḥammad al-Makhzūmī al-Madanī): He was one of the Followers and a well-known Traditionist. He died in AH95/713-4CE).

[1095] "ardent love": See Note 603.

Sa'id (bin) Jubayr[1096] (R) says: "The temptation of David came from his eyes."[1097] And David (A) said to his son: "It is lawful to chase after lions and dragons, but do not chase after women." John, the son of Zechariah[1098] (R) was asked: "Whence does adultery first come?" He replied: "From the eye and from lust."

The Messenger (S) said: "Looking at women is a poisoned arrow from the arrows of the devil. Whoever restrains his eye out of fear of God Most High is given a faith that he perceives in his soul." And the Messenger (S) said: "After my own death, I have not left my people any distress like women." He said: "The eye commits adultery just as the genitals. The adultery of the eye is looking." Consequently, it is incumbent upon whoever cannot restrain his eye to discipline his sexual craving. The remedy for this craving is fasting. If one cannot (abstain), (the remedy is) marriage.

If one cannot withhold the eye from beautiful youths, the calamity is much greater, for one cannot make this lawful for oneself.[1099] The looking of whoever is moved by his appetite to gaze upon a beardless youth and finds solace in that is forbidden, unless the nature of that solace is like that which he finds in gazing at greenery, blossoms, and fine drawings. There is no harm in that. The sign of this is that there be no internal urge to get close to him, for blossoms and flowers even though they are beautiful do not impel one to kiss and caress them. If such an urge appears, it is the sign of carnal appetite and the first step in committing sodomy.

One of the shaykhs (R) says: "I do not fear the attack of an angry lion upon a disciple as much as I fear (the effect of) a beardless youth (upon him)." A disciple said: "I am overwhelmed by carnal appetite, so much that I cannot endure it. I have wept and supplicated much. Then, one night, I dreamt that a person said to me: 'What has happened to thee?' I explained my problem to him. He placed his hand on my chest. When I awoke, it was accomplished.[1100] After a year, it (re-)appeared and I saw that person in a dream. He said: 'Dost thou want to be relieved of that?' I said that I did. He said: 'Lower thy neck.' I did that. He produced a sword and struck my neck with it. When I awoke, it had been accomplished. After a year, it appeared again. I wept and supplicated as before until I saw that person in a dream. He said to me: 'How long will thou ask God Most High to repel something the repulsion of which thou

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[1096] Sa'id Jubayr: Sa'id bin Jubayr, see Note 597.

[1097] A reference to the story of David and Bathsheba.

[1098] John, the son of Zechariah (*Yahya bin Zakariya*): the same as John the Baptist (see Note 812), the son of Zechariah. (Luke 1:13)

[1099] That is, such a craving cannot be satisfied lawfully (by means of marriage), as can be done in the case of the craving for women.

[1100] That is, the carnal appetite had subsided.

dost not like?' Then I awoke. I took a wife so as to free myself from that affliction."

Disclosing the Spiritual Reward for the Person Who Opposes This Appetite

Know that however much the appetite is stronger, the spiritual reward for opposing it is that much greater. There is no appetite stronger than this, but the desideratum of this appetite is unseemly. Most of those who do not give rein to this appetite are either unable to, or do not do so out of shame and the fear of disclosure and the ruin of their reputations. There is no spiritual reward for those who abstain for these reasons, for their obedience is motivated by the world, not by the Religious Law. And, an inability to commit sins is a blessing, for one will indeed not fall liable to punishment and sin, whatever the reason for one's abstinence. However, if a person masters this forbidden thing without any obstacle, and he abstains for the sake of God, his spiritual reward is great. He is one of the seven persons who shall be under the shade of the Throne of God Most High on the Day of Resurrection. His degree will be the degree of Joseph (A) in that meaning. Joseph (A) was the imam and leader in negotiating this dangerous passage.

Sulayman Yasar[1101] was extremely handsome. A woman showed herself to him and he fled from her. He said: "I saw Joseph (A) in a dream. I said: 'Art thou Joseph?' He said: 'Yes, I am Joseph who desired (her), and thou art Sulayman who did not desire (her)." This is a reference to: *And she certainly desired him, and he would have desired her*...(Q. 12:24)[1102]

This same Sulayman says: "I was traveling to perform the Greater Pilgrimage. When I went out of Madinah, I came to a place called Abwa'.[1103] My companion went to buy some food. An Arab woman, like a moon, came and unveiled her face, saying to me: '*Wilt thou make me happy?*' I thought that she wanted some bread. I called for the dining cloth. She said: 'I desire that which women desire from men!'" (Sulayman) said: "I hid my head under my collar and began to weep. I wept so much that the woman went away. When my companion came back, he saw the signs of weeping upon my face. 'What happened to thee?' he asked. I said: 'I began thinking about my children and I was

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[1101] Sulaymān Yasār: one of the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century Traditionists (*muḥaddithīn*) who taught Abu Hanifah at Madinah.

[1102] *And she certainly desired him, and he would have desired her if he had not seen the manifest evidence of his Lord.* (Q. 12:24) Zulaykha, the wife of Potiphar in Islamic tradition, made for Joseph, who was saved from the sin of adultery by his faith. While Joseph suppressed his desire for the woman, Sulayman fled immediately.

[1103] Abwā': a place on the old Pilgrim route between Makkah and Madinah.

weeping because of the sorrow (of separation) from them.' He said: 'No, a moment ago thou wert free of that. Something happened to thee. Tell me!' As he was insistent, I told him. He too began to weep. I said: 'And why art thou weeping?' He said: 'Because I fear that had it been I, I would not have been able to do (what thou didst).' When I reached Makkah and had circumambulated (the Ka'bah) and performed the Running (between the hillocks of Safa and Marwah), I was staying in my room and fell asleep. I saw a very handsome person with a cheerful countenance, pleasant-smelling, and tall. I said: 'Who art thou?' He replied: 'Joseph.' I asked: 'Joseph, the truly righteous?' He said: 'Yes.' I said: 'The story of thee with the wife of 'Aziz (Potiphar) of Egypt is a great wonder!' He said: 'That of thee and the Arab woman is greater.'"

Ibn 'Umar (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "In former times three persons went on a journey. Night fell and they went into cave to be safe. A huge stone fell from the mountain and blocked the entrance to the cave. There was no way they could move the stone. They said: 'There is nothing to be done except that we supplicate God and each one of us must show his good deeds to God. It may be that God Most High will give us an opening for the sake of that.' One of the three men said: 'O Lord God! Thou knowest that I have a mother and father and that I would not eat before they did, nor would I give (food) to wife and children. One day I was busy with some task and returned home late. They had gone to sleep. The bowl of milk that I had brought was in my hand as I waited for them to wake up. The children were crying and weeping. I said I would not give any to them before giving some to (my parents). They did not awaken until the morning and I remained holding the milk while I and my children were hungry. O Lord God! If Thou knowest that this was for nothing other than Thy pleasure, send us an opening.' As soon as he had said that, the stone moved and a small gap appeared, but it was not enough for them to be able to pass out through it.

"Another man said: 'O Lord God! Thou knowest that I have a cousin and that I was in love with her and I could not endure that, until there came a famine. She was in hardship and she came to me flirting. I gave her one hundred and twenty dirhams on the condition that she would submit to me. When I was about to do that deed, she said: 'Dost thou not fear God Most High that thou wouldst break His seal without His sanction?' I grew afraid and left the gold and did not pursue her, though there was nothing more in the world that I desired more than that. O Lord God! If Thou knowest that I did not do that except for Thy sake, grant us an opening!' Then the stone moved and the opening grew wider, but it was still not possible for them to pass outside through it.

"Then third man said: 'O Lord God! Thou knowest that once I had some day laborers. I paid them all off, except one person who had left without taking his pay. With that money, I bought a sheep on his

behalf and I traded with that in his name until it became a great wealth. One day, the man came to claim his pay. There was a large tract filled with cattle, sheep, and camels. I said: 'All of this is thy pay.' He said: 'Art thou mocking me?' I said: 'No, for all of this is the harvest of thy money.' I turned over all of that to him and took nothing back. O Lord God! If Thou knowest that this for Thy sake, give us an opening!" Then that stone moved and shifted from its place. The way was opened and all three came out."

Bakr bin 'Abdullah al-Mazani[1104] says: "There was a butcher who was in love with the daughter of his neighbor. One day, the girl was being sent to a village and the butcher followed her. He seized her in the desert. The girl said: 'O young man, I am more in love with thee than thou art with me, but I always fear God Most High.' He said: 'If thou fearest (Him), why should I not fear him?' He forswore that and returned home. On the way, he was overcome by thirst and was in danger of perishing. A man, who had been sent by one of the prophets of his time as a messenger to that place, came up to him and said: 'What has befallen thee?' He answered: "Thirst." (The messenger) said: 'Come, let us offer supplications to God Most High to send a cloud so that it may stay over us and shade us as we go to the town.' (The butcher) said: 'I am disobedient (to God), supplicate thou and I shall say *Amin*.' They did thus and a cloud came and stood over their heads so that they walked in its shadow. When they separated from each other, the cloud continued with the butcher and the messenger of that prophet remained in the sun. He said: 'O young man, thou saidst that thou art disobedient, yet now the cloud was for thee thyself. Tell me about thyself.' (The butcher) said: 'I do not know of any thing except the renunciation that I did because of what that girl said.' (The messenger) said: 'That is it! There is no acceptance for any person like that which God Most High has for the repenter!'"

Disclosing the Detriment of Looking at Women and That Which is Forbidden of That

Know that it is rare that a person obtain the strength in such a matter and be able to withhold himself. Therefore, it is better that at the beginning of the deed, he restrain himself, and the beginning is the eye.

'Ala' bin Ziyad[1105] says: "Gaze not at the veil of any woman, for from that carnal appetite appears in the soul." In fact, it is necessary to beware of looking at women's clothing, smelling their pleasing

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[1104] Bakr bin ʿAbdullāh al-Muzanī: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1105] ʿAlāʾ bin Ziyād: possibly the same as the 'Ala' bin Ziyad mentioned in *Tarjamah-yi Risalah-yi Qushayriyah*.

fragrance, listening to their voices; indeed, sending and listening to messages, and placing thyself in a place where it is possible that they may see thee even though thou cannot see them. For, wherever there is beauty, all of this sows the seeds of the carnal appetite and bad thoughts in the soul.

And women, too, must beware of handsome men. Every glance of desire is forbidden and every glance of passion, even when fully clothed, is forbidden. However, if the glance falls accidentally, it is not a sin, but the second glance is forbidden.

The Messenger (S) says: "The first glance is thine and the second is upon (thy head)!" And he said: "Whoever becomes a lover, restrains himself, conceals it, and dies from that sorrow, is a martyr. Restraining oneself is that: first, that glances should be accidental; and second, that one restrain one's eyes and not look or seek, and to keep that love hidden in the heart.

Know that there is no seed of corruption like the sitting of women and men in gatherings, feasts, and outdoor parties where there is partition between them. Know that it does not suffice for the women to be wearing conspicuous[1106] cloaks and face veils, for if the veil is white and there is some display in the wearing of the face-veil, the passions may be agitated, and it may appear better than if they leave their faces unveiled. Consequently, it is forbidden for women to go out wearing conspicuous cloaks or beautiful veils put on for display. Any woman who does this is a rebel (against God). If her husband and her relatives approve of this, then all share in the sin. The responsibility for any appetite or fantasy that stirs in the hearts of the men, and any corruption that arises from that, will be borne by the persons who gave (her) permission to do that.

Nor is it lawful for any man to wear a garment that has been worn by a woman for a carnal purpose, or to touch that garment passionately, or to smell it. Nor should he give sweet basil, an apple, or anything that is used to show favor to a woman, or accept that from her. Nor should he speak (to her) sweetly and softly. It is not lawful for a woman to speak to a strange man, except sternly and of necessity, as God Most High said: *If ye keep your duty, then be not soft of speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease yearn; but speak ordinary words.* (Q. 33:32) He says to the wives of the Messenger: "Speak not to strange men in a soft and pleasing voice." It is not proper (for a man) to put his lips to the place on a jug from which a woman has just drunk water.

A sage says that the wife[1107] and children of Abu Ayyub Ansari[1108] (R) used to pick up any cup from the Messenger (S) which his

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[1106] Conspicuous: literally 'white, bright, eye-catching' (*sapīd*).

[1107] Or wives.

[1108] Abu Ayyub Ansari: See Note 666.

fingers and mouth had touched and put their fingers in it for its blessedness. Just as there is spiritual reward in this, with respect to doing this for a purpose, there is sin. There is no avoidance more important than the avoidance of anything connected with women. *That is the end of it!*

Know that with any woman or youth one encounters in going about, Satan starts to urge: "Look at (her)[1109] to see how (she) is!" One must dispute with Satan, saying: "What should I look at? If (she) is ugly, the sorrow will stay with me; if (she) is beautiful, since (she) is not lawful to me, I would become a sinner, and the regret and sorrow would remain. If I follow (her), I dismiss my life and faith and it may be that I will not gain my objective."

On a road one day, the eye of the Messenger (S) fell upon a woman. He turned back and went home and lay with his wife immediately, performed the greater ablution and came back out and said: "Whenever a woman appears like a devil, and passion is aroused, ye should go to your home and lie with your wife, for that which is with your wife is the just like that which is with the strange woman."

[1109] The reader is reminded that Persian pronouns for animates have no gender. The translator has used the feminine (in parentheses) as a convention, but the situation could refer to handsome males as well as females.

CHAPTER THREE: THE APPETITE FOR WORDS AND THE HARM OF THE TONGUE

Know that the tongue is one of the wonders of the handiwork of God Most High. It is in the form of a lump of meat, but in fact, all that is in existence is under its control. Indeed, everything in nonexistence too, for it expresses both nonexistence and existence. Moreover, it is the representative of the intellect, and nothing is outside the precincts of the intellect. It expresses in words all that occurs in the intellect, the fancy, and the imagination. Other organs are not like this. The province of the eye is nothing other than colors and shapes; the province of the ear is nothing other than sound. The same is true of the other organs. The rule of each one does not extend beyond one part of the kingdom, but the rule of the tongue operates in the entire kingdom, as does the rule of the soul.

Since it is in reciprocity with the soul because it takes images from the soul and expresses them, in the same way, it also delivers images to the soul, and the soul receives some quality from whatever (the tongue) utters. If, for example, the tongue is supplicating and moaning and begins to utter the words of those, and it begins to speak the words of mourning, the soul begins to acquire the attribute of tenderness, sorrow, and pain from the tongue. The vapor of the soul's fire heads for the head and begins to come out of the eyes. And, when (the tongue) begins to speak words of mirth and the qualities of the good, a movement of glee and joy appears in the soul, and appetite moves. In the same way, from every word that it utters, a corresponding quality appears in the soul, so that when it speaks harsh words, the soul becomes dark. When it speaks the truth, the soul becomes luminous and when it speaks lies, the shape of the soul, too, becomes crooked so that it does not perceive things correctly, just as in a warped mirror. For this reason, most dreams of poets and liars do not come true, for their insides have become crooked from uttering lies and distortions. Whoever has made a habit of the truth, his dreams are true and correct.

In the same way that one does not see true dreams, the Divine Presence—the viewing of which if is the apogee of all pleasures—will appear crooked in his soul when going to the other world and he will not see it true. He will be deprived of the (spiritual) happiness of that pleasure. Indeed, even as a good face appears ugly in a distorting mirror, or as one looks (at a reflection) across the breadth of a sword or down the length of a sword, the pleasure of the beauty of the form is nullified, so, too, will be the affairs of the other world and the true nature of Divine matters. Therefore, the rectitude or crookedness of the soul will be subject to the rectitude or crookedness of the tongue. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "Faith will not be straight and true so long as the

soul is not true. The soul will not be true so long as the tongue is not true."

Consequently, guarding against the evil and harm of the tongue is one the most important aspects of religion. In this chapter, we shall speak of the virtues of silence; then, we shall discuss the harmful effects of talkativeness and meddling; the delight in debate; harboring grudges; the harm of foul language, execration, and insolence; the harm of cursing, buffoonery, and ridicule; the harm of lying, backbiting, gossiping, and double-dealing; and the harm of eulogizing and satirizing and all that is connected with them, all of them; and we shall discuss their remedy, *God, may He be honored and glorified, willing.*

Disclosing the Spiritual Reward of Silence

Know that since the harmful effects of the tongue are many and restraining oneself from them is difficult, there is no better policy than silence—to the extent one is able. Therefore, a person should not speak, except out of necessity. It is said that the saints are those whose speaking, eating, and sleeping is in the measure of their need. God Most High has explained this, saying: *There is no good in much of their conspiring save in him who enjoins voluntary charity or kindness or peace making among the people.* (Q. 4:114) He has said: "There is no good in talking save in ordering voluntary charity and ordering goodness and making peace upon people."

The Messenger (S) said: "*He who has been silent has been saved.*" "Whoever has remained silent has been saved." And he said: "Whoever has controlled his genitals, belly, and tongue has controlled all." Mu'adh Jabal (R) asked the Messenger (S): "O Messenger of God, which is the better deed?" The Messenger (S) stuck out his tongue and placed his finger on it, meaning silence.

'Umar (R) says: "I saw Abu Bakr holding his tongue in his finger, pulling and rubbing it. I said: 'O Successor to the Messenger of God! What art thou doing?' He answered: 'This has thrown me into difficulties.'"

The Messenger (S) said: "Most of the mistakes of the children of Adam are placed in their tongues." And he (S) said: "I inform you of the easiest of the acts of worship: a silent tongue and a good character." And he said: "Say to whoever believes in God Most High and the Resurrection: 'Speak nothing but good, or remain silent.'" Jesus (A) was asked: "Teach us something so that we may enter heaven." He said: "Never talk." They said: "We cannot do that." He said: "Then, say not anything but that which is good."

Our Messenger (S) said: "When thou seest a silent and dignified believer, approach him, for he will not be without wisdom." Jesus (A) said: "Worship is ten (parts); nine are silence and one is flight from

mankind." The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever talks much, errs much. Whoever errs much, sins much. For whoever sins much, the Fire (of hell) is worthier." It was for this that Abu Bakr (R) placed a stone on his tongue so that he would not be able to speak.

Ibn Mas'ud (R) said: "There is nothing worthier of being cut off than the tongue. Yunus (bin) 'Ubayd says: "I have never seen anyone whose guarding of his ears and tongue does not appear in all of his works."

Ahnaf was silent while people were talking with Mu'awiyah. They said (to Ahnaf): "Why dost thou not speak?" He replied: "If I lie, I fear God Most High; if I speak the truth, I fear you."

Rabi' bin Khuthaym did not talk about the world for twenty years. When he would rise in the morning, he would take pen and paper and would record everything he said. At night, he would make an accounting of that with himself.

Know that all of this merit for silence is because of the harm of the tongue. Its tip is always wiggling vainly. Its chatter is pleasant and fluent, but distinguishing between the bad and the good is difficult. Silence achieves safety from its mischief. The soul and resolve are serene and may address meditation and the remembrance (of God).

And know that there are four kinds of speech: one is that which is entirely harmful; the second is that in which there is both harm and benefit; the third is that in which there is no harm and no benefit—that speech is idle chatter and its harm is restricted to wasting time; and the fourth kind is that which is pure benefit. So, three fourths of speech is not worth saying, while one fourth is. And that is what He said: *Except in him who enjoins voluntary charity or kindness,* (Q. 4:114) and the truth of this which the Messenger (S) spoke: "Whoever was silent attained safety." Thou wilt not recognize the harmful effects of the tongue until thou knowest them, and they are eleven. We shall discuss them one by one:

The Harms of the Tongue

THE FIRST HARM is that thou utter words that are superfluous. If thou didst not utter them, there would be no loss to thee, neither in religion, nor in this world; but thou dost distance thyself from the excellence of Islam with (such talk). The Messenger (S) said: "*Among the excellences of the Islam of a man is his relinquishing of that which is not of his concern.*" Whatever the hand flees from taking is amongst the excellences of Islam. The parable of such speech is that thou stayest with some people and tell the story of thy journey—towns, foods, mountains, orchards, gardens, and all that occurred—without conveying to them the length and defects of the road to them. This is all idle chatter and one should flee from it; for if thou dost not speak of these things, there is no

loss. It is the same if thou seest a person and ask him something that does not concern thee, and this is when there is no harm in the question. But if, for example, thou shouldst ask: "Art thou fasting?" if he answers truthfully, he would be displaying his worship, which itself is not appropriate. In the same way, if thou askest: "Where art thou coming from, what art thou doing, and what wert thou doing?" it may happen that he cannot disclose this and fall into lying. This, itself, is wrong. It is meddling in that in which there may be no wrong.

It is said: "Luqman went to David (A) for a year while (David) was making chain mail.[1110] Luqman continually wanted to know what it was, but he did not ask until (David) had finished and put it on. Then he said: 'It is a very good garment for war.' Luqman understood and said: 'Silence is wisdom, but a person has no desire for that.'"

The cause for such a question is that one wants to understand the conditions of a people in order to open the way of conversation with a person so that he may display friendship. The remedy for this is that one know that death lies before one and it is near. Each glorification and remembrance that one makes is a treasure that is laid up. If it is lost, it has caused injury. The theoretical treatment is that. The practical treatment is that one go into seclusion, or place a stone in the mouth.

In the Traditions, it is related: "On the day of (the battle) of Uhud, a youth was martyred. They found him with a stone tied over his belly out of hunger. His mother brushed away the dirt on his face and said: '*May Paradise be pleasant for thee.* Mayst thou enjoy heaven.' The Messenger (S) said: 'What dost thou know? It may be that he had been miserly with something which was not of his concern, or he had said something about which was no affair of his.' The meaning of this is that he will be asked for a reckoning, and *may it be pleasant* is that there be no difficulty in his account.

One day the Messenger (S) said: "At this moment one of the inhabitants of heaven is coming through the door." Then 'Abdullah bin Salam[1111] (R) appeared through the door. He was informed of what the Messenger (S) had just said. They asked him: "What is thy work?" He replied: "My work is trivial, but I ignore that which does not concern me and do not wish ill for people."

Know that whatever may be said to someone in one word, if thou stretchest it out and make that one word two words, the second word is chatter, an evil for which thou art responsible.

[1110] In Islamic tradition, David is credited with the invention of chain mail. This is based upon the Quranic verse: *And We taught him the making of coats of mail for you, to protect you in your wars; will you then be grateful?* (Q. 21:80)

[1111] ʿAbdullāh bin Salām: a Companion of the Prophet. He was a learned rabbi of Madinah who accepted Islam. He said that he had recognized the signs of Muhammad's prophethood before his coming to Madinah.

One of the Companions (R) says: "There is the person who talks with me to whom it would be pleasanter for me to reply than cold water would be for the thirsty, but I do not reply out of fear that it would be idle chatter." Mutarrif bin 'Abdullah,[1112] may God have mercy upon him, says. "The name of God Most High must be greater in your soul than that ye invoke His name in every sentence, as when ye speak to a beast of burden or a cat, saying: 'May God do this or that to thee!'" The Messenger (S) said: "That person is blessed who has abandoned the excess of speech and who gives away the excess of wealth." That is, he has taken the tie string from his purse and put it on his tongue. The Messenger (S) said: "Nothing worse has been given to a person than a long tongue."

Know that whatever thou sayest is recorded against thee: *He utters no word but there is an observer with him ready.* (Q. 50:18) If it were thus, that the angels did not record without compensation and requested wages (from the talkers) for their writing, (people) would reduce their words to one tenth, out of fear (of having to pay for them). The harm of wasting time in talking too much is greater than the harm of the cost of the writing, if thou shouldst be dunned for it.

THE SECOND HARM is speaking about the false and sin. As for the false, it is speaking about heresies and speaking about the conflicts of the Companions and their events. The sin is that one tells stories of debauchery, or a gathering in which there is debate between two persons who revile each other, or torment each other, or in which anecdotes are related in which there are insults giving rise to laughter. All of these are sins, but not like the first calamity for that is a loss of status.

The Messenger (S) said: "There is the person who says something carelessly, without knowing its weight and scope, and those words transport him to the bottom of hell. And it may be that one say something carelessly, and those words will transport him to Paradise."

THE THIRD HARM is contradiction and dispute. (Such a person) is called a dissembler. There is the person whose habit it is to refute anything another says, saying: "That is not the way of it." The implication of this is: "Thou art a stupid, lying fool and I am clever, intelligent, and truthful." With this one sentence, two destructive characteristics gain strength: one is arrogance and the other is being loathsome to another.

[1112] Mutarrif bin 'Abdullah: Mutarrif bin ʿAbdullāh bin Shakhīr. An anecdote about him is found in *Tarjamah-yi Risalah-yi Qushayriyah*: He requested that if anyone had some need from him, that person put it in writing as he did not wish to see the baseness of importuning. He died AH 90/708-9CE.

It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "A mansion is being built in Paradise for whoever refrains from contradiction and enmity in speech and does not utter that which is false. A mansion is being built at the summit of Paradise for whoever does not utter that which is true."[1113] This increase of the spiritual reward for thee is because tolerating the frivolous and the false is more difficult. And he (S) said: "The faith of the people will not be complete until they refrain from contradiction, even if they are in the right."

The Messenger (S) has said: "The expiation for every quarrel that thou hast with a person is two bows of formal prayer." In short, a quarrel is that a person says something and thou seizest upon his mistake and show him his flaw. All of this is forbidden, because something is obtained by means of troubling another, and it is not proper for one Muslim to trouble another unnecessarily. In such things, it is not a religious obligation to reveal the mistake. Rather, remaining silent is one of the perfections of faith. However, if the subject is religious creeds, it is called dispute. This, too, is blameworthy unless thou disclosest the aspect of truth by way of counsel in private, as (then) there is the hope of acceptance. If not, thou shouldst remain silent. The Messenger (S) said: "No people was ever lost which had not been overcome with dispute." Luqman said to his son: "Argue not with the learned for they become thine enemies."

And know that nothing requires more strength than silence in the face of the absurd and the false. This is one of the virtues of earnest striving. Dawud Ta'i had gone into seclusion. Abu Hanifah (R) asked him: "Why dost thou not come out?" He replied: "I continually restrain my self from disputing by earnest striving." (Abu Hanifah) said: "Come to the debating assemblies and say nothing." (Dawud) said: "I did that. I never endured any earnest striving more difficult than that."

There is no greater calamity than that there be sectarian fanaticism in a city and that one group, seeking rank and followers, teach that disputation is (sanctioned) by religion. Their own rapacious nature and pride urges this, since they suppose that which they have is (sanctioned) by religion to the point that greed becomes established internally which cannot, of course, be patient with this, for there are several kinds of greed and pleasure for the self in it. Malik bin Anas (R) says: "Dispute is not a part of religion." All of the forefathers forbade disputing, except with a heretic. They would speak to him citing verses

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[1113] Following the HK text. AA has "for whoever utters that which is true." The difference between the two is the placement of a single dot (*bigūyad* for *nagūyad*). Comparison with the corresponding Arabic text in *The Revival* confirms HK. The interpretation would be that if one does not disclose the truth about someone's faults or sins, one would receive an even greater reward in heaven.

of the Quran and the Traditions of the Messenger, without quarrel and prolixity. If there were no benefit, then they would turn away.

THE FOURTH HARM is litigation concerning property when one goes to the judge or some other place. The injury of this is tremendous.

The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever litigates against someone without knowledge is in the displeasure of God Most High until he falls silent." It has been said: "There is nothing more distracting to the soul and more destructive of the pleasure of life and the virtue of religion than litigation over property." And it has been said that no pious person litigates over property, because litigation cannot be accomplished without excessive talk, and the pious eschew excess. Indeed, if there were nothing else, one cannot speak pleasantly with one's opponent, and the merit of pleasant speech is considerable. Therefore, it is important for anyone who has a lawsuit, if he is able, to give it up. If he cannot, he must speak only the truth and not aim at troubling (the opponent). He should not use harsh language and not seek more (than what is his right), for all of these are destroyers of religion.

THE FIFTH HARM is vituperation. The Messenger (S) has said: "Heaven is forbidden to anyone who utters foul language." And he (S) said: "There are persons in hell from whose mouths filth flows, the stench of which is a source of complaint for the dwellers in hell. They ask: 'Who is that?' They are answered: 'He is that person who, wherever there was foul and dirty language, would like that and used to utter it.'" Ibrahim bin Maysarah[1114] (R) says: "Whoever uses foul language will appear in the shape of a dog on the Day of Resurrection."

Know that most foul language makes ugly references to sexual intercourse, as is the habit of the iniquitous, while vilification is related to a person. The Messenger (S) said: "May that person be cursed whose mother and father are not pleased with him and who vilifies his own father." He was asked: "Who does this, O Messenger of God?" He said: "He who vilifies the mother and father of another so that his own mother and father is vilified (in return): that is as though he himself had done it (to his own parents)."

Know that just as talk about sexual intercourse should be by allusion, so should this be done with respect to every unseemly thing. It should not be spoken explicitly. The names of women should not be spoken plainly. Rather, one should say: "Those behind the curtain." A person who has an unseemly illness, such as piles, leprosy, etc., should

[1114] Ibrahim bin Maysarah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

be referred to as a "sick person." One must observe the rules for the use of such words, for they too are a kind of foul language.

THE SIXTH HARM is execration. Know that cursing animals, clothing, people, and all there is, is blameworthy. The Messenger (S) said: "The believer does not curse." A woman was with the Messenger (S) on a journey. She cursed her camel. The Messenger (S) said: "Strip that camel and drive it out of the caravan for it is accursed." The camel walked about for a time and no one approached it.

Abu Darda (R) says: "When a person curses the earth or something, that thing says: 'May that be cursed which is more greatly sinning against God Most High than both of us." One day Abu Bakr (R) was cursing something. The Messenger (S) was sitting. He said: "O Abu Bakr, a curse (and thou art) the most truthful! A curse and (thou art) the most truthful!" He said: "*Nay, by the Lord of the Ka'bah.*" (Abu Bakr) repented and freed a slave in atonement for that.

Know that curses are not appropriate against people, except for those persons who are blameworthy, as thou sayest: "May the oppressors be damned! May the corrupt, may the heretics, may the unbelievers be damned!" However, there is a danger in saying: "May the Mu'tazilites and Karramites be damned!" and from that some corruption may be born. One should avoid this, except when the word "curse" appears in the Religious Law with reference to them, or in sound Traditions. But saying "May thou be damned!" to a person or "May so-and-so be damned!"— this is not lawful for a person because one knows that by the Law, (cursing) is for a dead unbeliever such as Pharaoh or Abu Jahl. The Messenger (S) called a people unbelievers and cursed them, for he knew that they would not become Muslims.

However, there is a danger in saying "May thou be damned!" to a Jew, for it may be that he become a Muslim before his death and one of the inhabitants of heaven, and he may better (than he who is cursing him). If a person says: "We shall say to the Muslim 'May (God) have mercy upon thee!' it may be that he is an apostate and die in unbelief. So, we should not immediately say that, nor should we curse an unbeliever who is at that time an unbeliever." This is a mistake; for the meaning of mercy is that God exalt him to becoming a Muslim because of (His) mercy. Neither is it proper that thou say: "May God Most High make him an unbeliever." Therefore, it is not proper that one specify (the person) when imprecating.

Is it lawful if a person says: "May Yazid[1115] be cursed!"? We say: This much is lawful, that thou say: "May the slayer of Husayn (R) be

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[1115] Yazīd: the second caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, rgd. AH60-63/680-83CE. The son of Mu'awiyah I, he is notorious in Islamic history for his part in the tragedy of Karbala in which the grandson of the Prophet, Husayn bin 'Ali, was ruthlessly slain. Apparently not

cursed if he died before repenting!" because killing is not a greater (crime) than unbelief and should he repent, it is not proper to curse him. Wahshi[1116] killed Hamzah[1117] and (later) became a Muslim, and the curse has fallen from him. However, the condition of Yazid itself is not clear as to whether he killed (Husayn). Some said that he commanded it and others that he did not, but that he was content with (the killing). It is not right that one attribute a sin to an accused person, for this is itself a crime. In these times, many great persons have been slain and no one knows with certainty at whose command. So, after more than four hundred years, how can (the truth about Yazid) be known? God Most High has made people able to dispense with this meddling and this danger. If a person does not curse the devil all his life, it will not be asked of him at the Resurrection: "Why didst thou not curse (the devil) all the time?" However, if he curses someone, he puts himself in danger of interrogation as to why he did that and why he said it.

One of the great used to say: "Should the phrase *There is no god but God* appear upon my page (of my record) or cursing someone? I prefer that the phrase *There is not god but God* appear (there)." Someone said to the Messenger (S): "Give me some counsel." He said: "Do not curse (anyone)." It is said that cursing a Muslim is equivalent to murder. Some have said that this is a Tradition from Messenger (S). So, it is better to engage in glorifying (God) than it cursing the devil, not to mention anyone else! Whoever curses another person and says to himself that it is out religious firmness—that is a deception by Satan. Most of it is from fanaticism and passion.

THE SEVENTH HARM is poetry and song. We have explained in the chapter on *Music and Ecstasy*[1118] that these are not forbidden. Poetry was recited in the presence of the Messenger (S), and Hassan[1119] was ordered to reply to the satires by the unbelievers. However, that in which there are lies, or the lampooning of Muslims, or false praise is not proper.

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content with this, he ordered his army to quell a rebellion against his rule in Madinah—the city of the Prophet—which was subjected to three days of looting and rapine. The final catastrophe occurred in Makkah where another rebellion had broken out. This time the Ka'bah itself was burned. While the siege of Makkah was going on, his short, disastrous reign ended as Yazid "received the command"—that is, he died—and Makkah was spared the fate of Madinah.

[1116] Wahshi: the slayer of Hamzah (see following Note), the uncle of the Prophet at the battle of Uhud. He was a "wild" black man. *Wahshī* means "wild" in Arabic.

[1117] Hamzah: the uncle of the Prophet. He embraced Islam and was a staunch defender and champion of the Prophet's cause. He was killed at the battle of Uhud by Wahshi (see previous Note) and his body was mutilated AH3/624-5CE.

[1118] The Second Pillar, Chapter Eight.

[1119] Hassan: Hassān bin Thābit. He was a poet, first at the court of the Monophysite Christian Ghassanids in Syria. He later became attached to the Prophet. Reputedly, he lived 120 years, 60 as an idolater and 60 as a Muslim. He died AH54/674CE.

But, that which is said by way of simile or allegory, which is a poetic device, even if it is in the form of a lie, is not unlawful because its object is not that it be believed. Such poetry was recited in Arabic in the presence of the Messenger (S).

THE EIGHTH HARM is buffoonery. The Messenger (S) has forbidden jocosity totally, although a little of it from time to time is permitted. The prerequisite (for doing this) is a good character and on the condition that one does not make it a habit and a calling, and that one not speak anything but the truth. Making jokes wastes a lot of time and creates too much laughter. Too much laughter darkens the soul and detracts from a man's dignity and presence. It may be that he will be shunned.

The Messenger (S) said: "I joke, but I do not speak other than the truth." And the Messenger (S) said: "The person who speaks so that people will laugh falls from his degree as though it were from the Pleiades to the earth."

Whoever laughs a lot is blameworthy and laughing must not exceed smiling. The Messenger (S) said: "If ye knew what I know, ye would laugh little and weep much." And he said to another: "Dost thou not know that (thy) passage most certainly will be through hell? For God Most High has said: *There is not one of you but he shall approach (hell): that is the fixed ordinance of thy Lord.*" (Q. 19:71) (The other) said: "I know." (The Messenger) said: "Dost thou know that thou wilt come out of it?" He said: "No." (The Messenger) said: "Then what is laughter and where is there scope for laughter?"

'Ata Sulami[1120] (R) did not laugh for forty years. Wuhayb bin al-Ward says some people were laughing on the Festival (at the end) of Ramadan. He said: "If these people are forgiven and their fasting accepted, (laughing) is not the act of the thankful; if (their fasting) has not been accepted, it is not the act of the fearful." Ibn 'Abbas (R) said: "Whoever sins and keeps on laughing will go into hell and keep on weeping." Muhammad bin Wasi' said: "Would it be odd if a person wept in heaven?" They said: "It would be." He said: "Then the person who laughs in the world, not knowing whether his place is in hell or in heaven would be odder."

It is related in the Traditions that a desert Arab decided to go on his camel to the Messenger (S) to ask him a question. However much he tried to direct his camel, it would jump back and his friends would laugh. Then the camel threw him off and he died on the spot. His friends said: "O Messenger of God, the man fell off the camel and died." He said:

[1120] ʿAṭāʾ Sulamī: See Note 846.

"Yes, and your mouths are filled with his blood." That is, they had laughed at him.

'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz (R) said: "Fear God and do not joke, for rancor appears in souls and unseemly acts are born from that. When ye sit, discuss the Quran; if ye cannot, speak well of the lives of good men." And 'Umar (R) says: "Whoever jokes with a person becomes, in (that person's) opinion, base and undignified."

From the entire life of the Messenger (S), two or three words of jest have been recorded: He said to an old woman: "Old women do not go to heaven." The old woman wept. He said: "Old woman, do not concern thy soul, for first thou wilt be made young and then transported to heaven!" A woman said to him: "My husband is asking for thee." He said: "Is thy husband the one who has cataracts (whiteness) in his eyes?" She said: "No, he does not have cataracts." He said: "Woman! There is no one who does not have whiteness in his eye." A woman said: "Place me on a camel." (The Messenger) said: "Should I place thee on a baby camel?" She said: "I do not want that, as it may throw me off." (The Messenger) said: "There is no camel that is not the baby of another camel." Abu Talhah[1121] had a child named Abu 'Umayr. (The boy) had a sparrow and it died. He cried continuously. The Messenger (S) saw him and said (to Abu 'Umayr): "*O father of 'Umayr, what did the little sparrow do to the little sparrow*?"

Most of these jokes were with women and children, to amuse them so that they not become frightened by his awesome presence. He was in the habit of making such pleasantries with his wives for their amusement.

'Ayishah (R) says: "Sawdah[1122] (R) came to me. I had cooked something made from milk. I said: 'Eat some.' She said: 'I shall not eat any!' I said: 'If thou dost not eat some, I shall rub it on thee.' She said: 'I shall not eat any.' I reached down and took some of it and rubbed it on her face. The Messenger (S) was sitting between us. She pulled her knee back so that she too could find an opportunity to retaliate against me and she too rubbed some of it on my face, and the Messenger (S) was smiling.

[1121] Abu Talhah: Abu Talhah bin Sahl, a Companion of the Prophet. He participated in the expedition against Khaybar. In another incident, he found his attention diverted by a bird flying about when he was performing formal prayer in his garden. In penance, he gave the garden to the Prophet do dispose of as he wished. The Prophet in turn gave it to Hassan bin Thabit (see Note 1119).

[1122] Sawdah: the daughter of Zamaᶜah bin Qays and the Prophet's second wife, she was previously married to her cousin Sakran bin 'Amr. The couple embraced Islam and went to Ethiopia. Widowed there, she returned to Arabia and married the Prophet. She died AH54/674CE.

Dahhak bin Sufyan[1123] was a very ugly man. He was sitting with the Messenger (S) and said: "O Messenger of God, I have two wives more beautiful than 'Ayishah. If thou wishest, I shall divorce one of them so that thou may ask for her." He was saying this as a pleasantry so that 'Ayishah (R) could hear it. 'Ayishah said: "Are they more beautiful than thee?" He said: "I?" The Messenger (S) smiled at 'Ayishah's question, for that man was very ugly. This was before the verse commanding the veiling of women was revealed.[1124]

And the Messenger (S) said to Suhayb:[1125] "Art thou eating dates while having a sore eye?" He replied: "I eat them with the other side." The Messenger (S) laughed.

Khawwat bin Jubayr[1126] had an inclination toward women. One day he was standing with a group of women. The Messenger arrived and (Khawwat) was embarrassed. (The Messenger) asked: "What art thou doing?" (Khawwat) answered: "I have a stubborn camel, I want these women to spin me a rope for the camel." Then, (the Messenger) left. (Khawwat) said: "After that he saw me and asked: 'Khawwat, hast thou not given up on that stubborn camel?'" (Khawwat) added: "I was ashamed and would keep silent. After that, every time he saw me he would say that, until one day I was coming by riding an ass, with both legs on one side of the animal's flanks. He said: 'O Khawwat. What is the last news of that stubborn camel?' I said: 'By that God Who truly sent thee to mankind so that I may become a Muslim, it is not stubborn any more.' He said: '*God is greater! O God, guide Abu 'Abdullah!*'"

Nu'ayman Ansari[1127] used to joke a lot and drink (wine) a lot, and each time he would be hauled before the Messenger (S) and beaten

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[1123] Daḥḥāk bin Sufyān: surnamed al-Kilābī, a Companion of the Prophet. He was a commander in the battle of Hunayn (AH8/630CE) in which the Muslims defeated the Hawazin.

[1124] Q. 33:59: *O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close around them (when they go abroad). That will be better, so that they may be recognized and not annoyed. God is ever Forgiving, Merciful.*

[1125] Suhayb: Suhayb bin Sinan, a Companion of the Prophet. He was born in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), his father a governor of the Sassanid Persian rulers of the day. Captured by Byzantines, he was finally sold as a slave in Makkah to 'Abdullah bin Jud'an. His intelligence pleased his master who manumitted him. He embraced Islam in its early days and was caught while trying to emigrate to Madinah. Much beloved by the Prophet, when caliph 'Umar was stabbed leading the formal prayer in the mosque in Madinah (AH23/644CE), 'Umar asked him to lead the prayer.

[1126] Khawwāt bin Jubayr: nicknamed Abū ʿAbdullāh, a Companion of the Prophet and brother of Ibn 'Amr bin 'Awf. He was one of the groups of men sent out by the Quraysh during the events of siege of Madinah and the battle of the Ditch in order to learn whether reports of the Madinan Jews' breaking their agreements with the Prophet and conniving with the his enemies, in violation of their treaty, were true. (They were.)

[1127] Nuʿaymān Anṣārī: one of the Madinans who aided the Muslims emigrating from Makkah.

with shoes. Then, once one of the Companions said: "*God has cursed him*, how long will he drink wine?" The Messenger (S) said: "Do not curse him, for he loves God Most High and His Messenger." It was his habit that whenever fresh fruit was brought to Madinah, (Nu'ayman) would get some and take it to the Messenger as a present. Then, when (the seller) wanted the price, (Nu'ayman) would take him to the Messenger (S) and would say: "He ate it. Get thy money from him." The Messenger (S) would laugh and would pay the money. Then, the Messenger would say (to Nu'ayman): "Why didst thou bring it?" He would answer: "I did not have any money, but I did not want anyone to eat it but thou. What can I do?"

These are all of the pleasantries related from his life. Among them, there is nothing false, nor was it possible for anyone to be troubled, nor did they detract from his dignity. In this manner, it is an occasional Practice (of the Prophet), but making a habit of it is not lawful.

THE NINTH HARM is the mockery and ridicule of a person and retailing his words and deeds in song and eulogies to cause laughter. This, when that person will be annoyed, is forbidden, for God Most High says: *Let not a people deride (another) people; it may be that (the latter) are better than (the former).* (Q. 49:11) Do not laugh at anyone or look at him with contempt for it may be that he is better than ye are.

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever bears tales about a person concerning a sin for which that person has repented will not die without being afflicted for that." He prohibited laughing when some one passes wind audibly. And he said: "Why should a person laugh at something when he does something like that?" And he said: "On the Day of Resurrection the gates of Paradise will be opened upon people who ridicule others and laugh at them. It will be said to them: 'Come in.' When they come forward, they will be barred from entering. When they go away, they will be called back and the gate reopened upon them. When they are close, it will be slammed shut. This will be repeated until they stop approaching and realize that they are being mocked."

Know that making fun of a person who will not be upset by that is not forbidden and is of the character of play (or a jest). It is forbidden when a person will become annoyed.

THE TENTH HARM is the false promise. The Messenger (S) used to say: "There are three things that, if a person is involved with any one of the three, he is a hypocrite, even though he performs formal prayer and keeps the fast (of Ramadan): when he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he does not keep it; and when he is entrusted with something, he betrays it." And he said: "Giving a promise is a loan." That is, it is not proper to violate it.

God Most High praised Ishmael (A) because he kept his word. It is said that he gave his word to a person to meet him at some place, and that person did not come. (Ishmael) waited for him for twenty-two days in order to keep his word.

Someone says: "I swore allegiance to the Messenger (S) and promised to come to some place, but I forgot. I went on the third day; (the Messenger) was there. He said: 'Young man, I have been waiting here for thee for three days.'" And the Messenger (S) had given his word to someone, saying: "When thou comest, ask for something and I will arrange for it." At the time when the spoils from (the battle of) Khaybar were being divided, he came and said: "My promise, O Messenger of God." (The Messenger) said: "Decide whatever thou wantest." He wanted 80 sheep, and they were given to him. Then he said: "Thou didst decide for very little. That woman who showed Moses the bones of Joseph (A) when he was looking for them—he promised her that he would meet her request. So, Moses (A) said to her: 'What dost thou want?' She answered: 'I want my youth returned to me and to be together with thee in heaven.'" After that, the action of that man became a proverb and the Arabs would say: "So-and-so is more lenient that the master of the eighty sheep."

Know that thou shouldst not make a definite promise about something thou art unable to do. The Messenger (S), when giving his word, used to say: "*Perhaps*... It is to be hoped that I will be able to do (it)." When thou hast given thy word, as much as thou art able, thou shouldst not break it, except out of strong necessity. If thou promisest to meet someone somewhere, the scholars have said that one must remain there until the time of the formal prayer.

Know that if thou givest something to someone, asking for its return is more unseemly than breaking a promise. The Messenger (S) likened such a person to the dog that vomits and then eats it.

THE ELEVENTH HARM is lying and swearing false oaths. These are great sins. The Messenger (S) said: "Lying is one of the gates of hypocrisy." And he (S) said: "The servant (of God) utters lies one by one until he is counted by God Most High a liar." And he (S) said: "Lying decreases sustenance." And he (S) said: "Merchants are libertines." That is, merchants are immoral. He was asked: "When selling is lawful, why?" He replied: "Because they swear oaths and become sinners. They speak and they lie." And he (S) said: "Woe to the person who lies so that people will laugh! Woe unto him! Woe unto him!" And he (S) said: "I have seen thus: a man said to me: 'Arise!' I arose. I saw two men, one standing and the other sitting. The one who was standing had thrust a piece of iron with a hooked end into the mouth of the man who was sitting, pulling one corner of his mouth, stretching it until it reached his shoulder. The other side (of his mouth) was stretched in the same way,

the front was turned back, and he continued to do this. I asked: 'What is this?' He said: 'This is a liar. He will be punished in this way until the Day of Resurrection.'"

'Abdullah bin Jarrad[1128] (R) asked the Messenger (S): "Does a believer commit adultery?" He answered: "It may be that he does." ('Abdullah) asked: "Does he lie?" (The Messenger) replied:" No." He recited this verse: *Only they forge lies who believe not in God's revelations, and they are liars.* (Q. 16:105) Those persons lie who have no faith.

'Abdullah bin 'Amir[1129] (R) says: "A child came by playing. I said: 'Come, so I can give thee something.' The Messenger (S) was in our home. He said: 'What didst thou want to give him?' I said: 'Dates.' He said: 'If thou hadst not given them to him, a lie would have been recorded against thee.' Then he said: 'Let me inform you what the greatest sins are: polytheism and disobedience of one's mother and father.' He was sitting back (against a cushion). He sat up and said: '*Except for the lying word.* Lying also.' And he (S) said: "The angels flee from the stench of the lie uttered by a servant (of God) for a mile." It is because of this that it is said when a person sneezes while speaking that he is speaking the truth. It is related in the Traditions: "A sneeze is from the angels while a yawn is from Satan." If the speech were false, an angel would not be present and there would not be a sneeze. And he (S) said: Whoever repeats a lie is a liar." And he said: "God Most High sees whoever takes someone's property by swearing a false oath and He will be angry with him." And he (S) said: "All traits are possible in a believer except treachery and lying."

Maymun bin Abi Shabib[1130] says: "I was writing a letter. A word came that if I wrote it down would have embellished the letter, but it was a lie. Then, I decided to use it. I heard a cry: *God confirms those who believe in the Firm Word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter.* (Q. 14:27) Ibn Sammak[1131] says: "There is no reward for my not speaking lies; I do not utter them because I disdain lying."

[1128] ʿAbdullāh bin Jarrād: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1129] ʿAbdullāh bin ʿĀmir: surnamed al-Qurashī. A Companion and a member of the Quraysh tribe, as his surname (*laqab*) indicates, he took part in the conquests of Fars and eastern Iran and was appointed governor of Basrah by Caliph 'Uthman. He died at Makkah AH59/679CE.

[1130] Maymūn bin Abī Shabīb: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1131] Ibn Sammāk: See Note 828.

EXCURSUS: [THE EXPEDIENT LIE][1132]

Know that a lie is forbidden because it affects the soul, distorting the form of the soul and darkening it. However, if one falls into the need for doing that, and one utters it for some prudent purpose, and one dislikes doing so, it is not forbidden because, since it is disliked, the soul is not affected (by it) and is not distorted. Because it is for some good purpose, the soul is not darkened. There is no doubt that if a Muslim flees an oppressor, it is not appropriate to speak the truth as to where he has gone. On the contrary, a lie here is obligatory. The Messenger (S) gave permission for lying in three situations: one is during war, for one cannot tell the enemy one's true intentions; another is when one is making peace between two persons, attributing some good words from one to the other and vice versa, even though they were never spoken; and the other is when a man has two wives and tells each one that he loves her the most.

Therefore, know that if an oppressor inquires about someone's property which that person has hidden, or if he asks about some other secret, it is lawful to deny knowledge, for the Law has declared that unseemly deeds should be hidden. If a woman will not be obedient except by promises, it is permitted to give her a promise even though one will not be able to fulfill it. That and their like are permitted. The limit of this is that lies ought not to be spoken, but since something will be born from the truth that should be avoided, one must weigh this in the scales of justice and equity. If the non-existence of that thing is more to be desired in the Law than the non-existence of a lie—such as battle among the people and aversion between a wife and husband, the loss of property, the disclosure of a secret, or the disgrace of a sin—then a lie becomes allowable. For, the evil of the act is greater than the evil of the lie. This is just the same as when carrion[1133] becomes lawful when one's life is in danger. However, a lie does not become permissible for whatever is not of that nature. Therefore, every lie a person tells for the purpose of increasing rank or property, or in boasting, self-praise, and describing the degree of one's own magnificence—all of these are forbidden.

Asma'[1134] (R) says: "A woman asked the Messenger (S): 'I tell stories about my husband's consideration that are not (true) so that his

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[1132] Heading from the AA text.

[1133] "carrion": in Islamic Law carrion flesh is unlawful, as is the flesh of swine, etc. But where there is no other food, the unlawful becomes lawful to preserve life, a need which takes precedence over the Law in such situations.

[1134] Asmā': a daughter of Abu Bakr. She was the eighteenth person to embrace Islam. Married to Zubayr, she gave birth to the first Muslim baby after the Migration to

other wife will become angry at me. Is that permitted?' He said: 'Whoever attributes something to himself that is not (true) is like the person who puts on two garments, one over the other." That is, both the lie itself and the throwing someone into error and ignorance so that that person will tell the story and also lie. Know that promising a child something so that he will go to school is lawful, even if be a lie. In the Traditions, it is said that that will not be recorded against one. However, that which is permissible will also be recorded, so that he will be asked: "Why didst thou say that?" Then he must show a justification for that lie's being permissible.

Know that it is forbidden for a person to tell a story or answer a question when he does not truly know, for this is done so that his own importance be not decreased.

Some have held that it is permissible to attribute Traditions to the Messenger (S) commanding good deeds and their spiritual reward. This, too, is forbidden. For, the Messenger (S) used to say: "To whoever tells a lie about me, say: 'Take thy place in hell.'" Since a lie—except for some just purpose that is an objective in the Religious Law—is not proper, and that (purpose) can be known by supposition, but not with certainty. It is preferable that one not tell a lie, so long as the certainty is not apparent and the necessity is not overwhelming.

EXCURSUS: [APPROVED AND DISAPPROVE STRATAGEMS IN LYING][1135]

Know that when the saints fell into the need of a lie they used to resort to the stratagem of using words which were (literally) true so that a person would understand something different, which was the intention. This is called circumlocution,[1136] as when Mutarrif (R) went to a prince, (the prince) asked: "Why dost thou come so infrequently?" (Mutarrif) replied: "Since leaving the prince (the last time), I have not raised my side from the earth except when God Most High gave me the strength." This so that (the prince) would think that he had been ill. The words were (literally) true.[1137] When anyone sought Sha'bi at the door of his residence, he would instruct his servant girl to describe a circle with her

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Madinah. (She was 27 at that time.) At the Prophet's prompting, she became noted for her generosity.

[1135] Heading from the AA text.

[1136] "circumlocution": evasion in speech; parables, double meanings, etc.

[1137] Mutarrif was speaking the literal truth: he did not rise except that God gave him the strength to do so, as is always the case for all mankind. The prince's interpretation of the words, that Mutarrif was ill abed between his infrequent visits, could be extrapolated from the words and Mutarrif did not disabuse him of that interpretation.

finger and place the finger inside it and say: "He is not in here."[1138] Or, she would say: "Look for him in the mosque."[1139]

When Mu'adh[1140] (R) returned from an assignment, his wife said to him: "Thou hast done the work for 'Umar (bin) Khattab (R) for some time; what hast thou brought us?" He replied: "There was a guard with me. I was not able to bring anything." The woman thought that perhaps 'Umar had sent an inspector with him. The woman went to the house of 'Umar and reproved him and said: "Mu'adh was trusted by the Messenger (S) and by Abu Bakr (R)! Why didst thou send an inspector with him?" 'Umar summoned Mu'adh and asked what the matter was. When he told him, he laughed and gave him something to give his wife.

Know that these (stratagems) are permitted when it is necessary. However, when it is not and it throws people into error, it is not permissible, even if the words are (literally) true. 'Abdullah bin 'Utbah[1141] (R) says: "We went together with my father to 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz. When I came out, I had on a fine garment. People said: 'This is a robe of honor from the Commander of the Believers.' I said: 'May God Most High reward the Commander of the Believers a good reward!' My father said to me: 'Son, take care not to tell a lie or say anything resembling a lie!'" That is, that resembled a lie.[1142] However, with a trivial motive, this too is allowed, just as pleasantries and amusing someone are, as when the Messenger (S) had said: "An old woman does not enter heaven." But if there is some harm in it, it is not lawful, as when duping someone by saying that some woman likes him so that he will set his heart on that and the like. However, if there is no harm and one lies as a joke, it does not reach the level of a sin, yet it decreases the perfection of the degree of faith.

The Messenger (S) says: "The faith of person is not complete until that time when he approves for people that which he approves for himself and leaves off lying in jest. Of this kind are the things one says sometimes to please (another), such as: "I've come to thy house a hundred times looking for thee!" This does not reach the level of the forbidden as it is known that this is not an exact number and is said to

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[1138] Sha'bi was not of course literally within the circle described by the servant girl's finger, so he had not lied.

[1139] Sha'bi may have been at home, but the visitor was sent to look for him in the mosque without Sha'bi's (servant) actually saying that he was not at home and actually in the mosque.

[1140] Mu'adh: Mu'ādh bin Jabal.

[1141] 'Abdullāh bin 'Utbah: The reference would place him at the end of the 1st Islamic (first half of 8th CE) century.

[1142] That is, the people had assumed that the Commander of the Believers (caliph) had given him a robe of honor and 'Abdullah's words implied a confirmation of that assumption, though it was not true. For this, he earned a rebuke from his father.

indicate many times, even though they are not that many. However, if one has not sought (the person) many times, it is a lie.

And, as is the custom, when someone says: "Eat something," a person replies: "I do not need anything." This is not proper when one has an appetite for it. On the night of his marriage to 'Ayishah (R) the Messenger gave a bowl of milk to the women. They said: "We do not need any." He said: "Do not join a lie and hunger together!" They said: "O Messenger of God, is something as trivial as that a lie?" He said: "It is a little lie, and little lies are (also) recorded."[1143]

Sa'id Musayyab[1144] had a painful eye and something had accumulated in the corner of that eye. They said: "What will happen if thou cleanest it?" He said: "I told the doctor that I do not touch my eye. If I (clean it), I will have told a lie."

Jesus (A) says: "One of the major sins is to swear falsely by God Most High and then to say: 'God Most High knows that it is this way and not that way.'" The Messenger (S) has said: "Whoever lies about a dream will be compelled to tie a knot on a grain of barley at the Resurrection."

THE TWELFTH HARM is backbiting. This, too, may conquer the tongue and no one, except by *what God has willed*, is free from it. The evil consequences of this are great. In the Quran, God Most High likens it to him who eats the flesh of his dead brother.[1145] The Messenger (S) said: "Keep far away from backbiting, for backbiting is worse than adultery. Repentance for adultery may be accepted, but it is not accepted for backbiting so long as (the victim) does not absolve (the backbiter)." And he said: "On the Night of the Ascension I passed by some people who were tearing the flesh of their faces with their own fingernails. I asked: 'Who are these people?' I was answered: 'They are those who slandered others.'"

Sulayman bin Jabir[1146] (R) says: "I said to the Messenger (S): 'Teach me something that will help me.'[1147] He said: 'Do not despise good works; even if it is but to pour some water from thine own bucket into the jug of another; or be cheerful with a brother Muslim, and when he leaves thee, do not backbite him.'" God Most High sent a revelation to Moses (A): "Whoever dies having repented his backbiting will be the

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[1143] Recorded by the recording angels for a final account at the Resurrection.

[1144] Sa'id Musayyab: see Note 1094.

[1145] *O ye who believe! Shun much suspicion; for, lo! some suspicion is a sin. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Ye abhor that! So keep your duty (to God). Lo! God is Forgiving of the repentant, Merciful.* (Q. 49:12)

[1146] Sulaymān bin Jābir: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1147] "will help me": literally, "will take my hand" (*dast-i marā gīrad*).

last to enter heaven. If he has not repented, he will be the first person to enter hell."

Jabir (R) says: "I was traveling with the Messenger of God and we passed two graves. He said: 'Those two are in torment, one for backbiting and the other used not to protect his clothing from urine.' Then he broke a stick into two pieces and thrust one into each grave. He said: "So long as they are not dry, their torment will be lightened.'"

When a man confessed to adultery, it was ordered that he be stoned. One person said to another: "They took aim at him as they take aim at a dog!"[1148] Then, the Messenger passed by some carrion and said: "Eat of that carrion!" They said: "How can we eat carrion?" He said: "What ye are now eating of your brother is worse and more putrid than that is." This included both the speaker and the listener, for the listener was a partner in that sin.

The Companions (R) were cheerful when they met one another and did not engage in backbiting one another. They held this to be the most meritorious act of worship and counted its opposite as hypocrisy. Qatadah[1149] (R) says: "The torment of the grave is of three kinds: one third is for backbiting, one third is for gossiping, and one third is for not protecting one's clothing from urine."

Jesus (A) and his disciples passed by a dead dog. They said: "What a stinking thing!" Jesus (A) said: "The whiteness of its teeth is a beautiful thing, and backbiting (the dead animal) has a greater stench." He was teaching them ye should speak of whatever is better about whatever ye see. A pig passed by Jesus. He said: "Go in peace!" They said: "O Spirit of God, dost thou always speak thus to the pig?" He replied: "I do not acquaint my tongue with anything other than the good."

'Ali bin al-Husayn (R) saw someone who was always backbiting. He said: "Be still! That is the stew of the dogs of hell."

EXCURSUS: [THE KINDS OF BACKBITING][1150]

Know that backbiting is that one say (something) about someone in his absence which, should he hear it, would displease him,

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[1148] Thus HK. AA substitutes the word "stone" (*sang*) for "dog" (*sag*) which it closely resembles in Persian orthography. AA's reading would be something like: "They aim the stones as they did at him," which seems less appropriate considering the remarks of the Prophet which follow.

[1149] Qatādah: Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Qatādah bin Diyāmah al-Sadūsī. Ghazzali quotes him elsewhere, as in *Counsel for Kings*. Born in Basrah about AH59/679CE, he was a pupil of Hasan al-Basri and an exegete. Allegedly, he was a Qadarite and he foreshadowed Mu'tazilite thinking. (Bagley) He was said to have been blind and was noted for his knowledge of genealogy. He died AH117/735CE.

[1150] Heading from the AA text.

even if what has been said is true. This is backbiting. And if it be untrue, it is called a falsehood or slander. Anything thou sayest that inflicts harm on a person is backbiting, even though all of what thou sayest is relevant to his position or his animals, residence, or his affairs. However, what thou sayest about his body—he is tall, he is swarthy, he is pale, his eyes are grey, impudent, or squinty; or about his origin—as thou sayest he is the son of a slave, or the son of cupper, or the son of a weaver; or thou speakest about his nature—he is bad-natured, he arrogant, he is rude, he is cowardly, he is weak, and the like; or thou sayest about his deeds—he is a thief, he is treacherous, he does not perform the obligatory formal prayers, he does not bow and prostrate himself fully (in prayer) and recites the Quran incorrectly and his does not wear clean clothing or give the poor-rate, he eats forbidden things, he does not restrain his tongue, he overeats, he oversleeps, he does not stay in his own place; or thou sayest (something) about his clothing—the sleeves are loose and the skirt is too long and the clothing is dirty—about all of this the Messenger (S) said: "Whatever thou sayest that would displease a person should he hear it is backbiting even if it be true."

'Ayishah (R) says: "I told a woman that she was short. The Messenger (S) said (to me): 'Thou hast backbitten. Spit it out.' I spit and there was a bit of black blood in it that which had come up from my throat. He said: 'Ask forgiveness from God one hundred times and then ask absolution from her.'"

Some have said: "If a person commits a sin, relating the story of that is not backbiting, for reproaching (sin) is also a part of religion." This is a mistake. Indeed, it is not right to say he is a sinner or he is a winebibber or he does not perform the obligatory formal prayers, except with an excuse such as will be discussed below. The Messenger (S) has said that the law of backbiting is that when a person hears it, he should disapprove of it. Disapproval comes from all these: if there is no benefit in saying something, it should not be said.

EXCURSUS: [BACKBITING WITH THE EYE, HAND, AND GESTURE][1151]

Know that backbiting is not just that which is uttered by the tongue. Rather, be it by the eye, a gesture, the hand, or in writing—are all forbidden. 'Ayishah (R) says: "I pointed to a short woman with my hand. The Messenger (S) said: 'Thou hast backbitten her.'" The same is true for limping or squinting to mimic a person's condition; all are backbiting. However, if one does not mention a name and says: "A person did thus," it is not backbiting, unless those present wish to know who is being referred to. Then, it is forbidden, in whatever manner the

[1151] Heading from the AA text.

point is made known. Some of the ignorant ascetics and pious backbite, supposing that it is not backbiting, as when they talk about someone in his presence and say: "*Praise be to God* that God Most High has preserved us from such-and-such a thing," so that (others) will know that that person does that thing. Or, they say: "So-and-so is a man of very good circumstances, but he, too, is afflicted by people as we have also been afflicted. Who obtains escape from slips and calamities?" and the like. It may be that they censure themselves in order to achieve the censure of another.

And it may happen that they backbite him in his presence. One says: "Glory be to God! Bravo to thee!" so that that person may become more merry, or that the others in the assembly, who were not paying attention, may listen. And one says: "I was saddened to hear what had happened to so-and-so. May God Most High suffice him!" The object being that others learn of that event. Or, it may be that when talking about someone, one says: "May God Most High cause our repentance!" so that it be made known that he has committed a sin. All of this is backbiting. However, when it is like this, it is also mixed with hypocrisy, for one presents himself as a devout person and not a backbiter, thus making one sin two. In his ignorance, he supposes that he has not backbitten (anyone). And a person may backbite and someone say (to him): "Silence! Do not backbite!" without disapproving of it in his heart. This is both hypocrisy and backbiting.

One day Abu Bakr and 'Umar (R) were walking together. One said to the other: "So-and-so sleeps a lot." Then they sought stew from the Messenger (S). He said: "Ye have eaten the stew." They replied: "We do not know what we ate." He said: "Ye both have eaten the flesh of one of your brethren." He included both in this; one had spoken and the other had listened. And if one disapproves in his heart and signs with his eye, hand, or a gesture to be silent, he has still been remiss. He most say so seriously and explicitly lest the right of the absent person be neglected, for it is related in the Traditions that God Most High will, at the moment of one's greatest need, forsake whoever backbites his Muslim brother, does not help him, or forsakes him.

Excursus: [Backbiting in the Heart Is as Forbidden as That With the Tongue][1152]

Know that backbiting in one's heart is just as forbidden as that with the tongue. As it is not right that thou tell someone's deficiency to another, it is also not right that thou tell thine own self that. Backbiting in the heart is that thou suspectest a person without thy having seen him do

[1152] Heading from the AA text.

anything with thine own eyes, heard it with tine own ears, or without knowing it for certainty.

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High has forbidden the blood of the Muslim, his property, and that one harbor suspicion about him." Anything which occurs to the heart which is not certain and not based upon the word of two just persons has been prompted by Satan. God Most High says: *(O ye who believe!) If an evildoer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it, (lest ye ignorantly harm a people then repent of what ye have done.)* (Q. 49:6)[1153] Do not believe the words of the sinner, and there is no sinner like Satan. It is forbidden to lend your heart to that. However, thou art not held culpable for any thought that appears involuntarily and is repugnant to thee. For, the Messenger (S) says: "The believer is not devoid of bad thoughts, but his safety lies in that in his heart he does not consider them true."

As long as there is a place or scope for the possibility, one should interpret (the thought) in a better way. The sign of its being considered true is that the heart becomes heavier and one begins to omit some of one's consideration for that person. However, when one's heart, tongue, and dealings with him are as they were before, that is the sign that one does not consider it true. But, if one hears it from a just person, he must pause and not consider him a liar, for being suspicious of this just person is also not lawful—nor of a corrupt person either. Rather, one should say: "This man's condition is hidden from me as it was for that man. It is still hidden from me now." Then, if one knows that between them there is some enmity or envy, pausing is to be preferred. If one knows that man to be more just, one should incline more towards him. Whenever a suspicion occurs in one's heart about someone, it is better that one grow closer to that person, for that angers Satan and decreases suspicion. When one knows for certain, one should not backbite. Rather, one should advise him privately. One should not lord it over him while giving counsel. Instead, one should be sorrowful during that counseling, so that one may both be sorry for a Muslim and also give counsel (to him), and obtain the reward for both (acts).

EXCURSUS: [THE TREATMENT FOR BACKBITING][1154]

Know that the appetite for backbiting is a sickness of the soul, and it is necessary to treat it. Its treatment is of two types:[1155]

[1153] The translator has cited the full verse for clarity. Ghazzali's text does not included the words in parentheses.

[1154] From the AA text.

[1155] This sentence is a bit confusing. In fact, this excursus is divided into two parts, the first part *theoretical* and the second part the *particulars of the treatment* in detail.

THE FIRST TREATMENT is theoretical and is of two kinds: One is that one meditate upon the Traditions which have come down about backbiting, and understand that the good deeds of whoever backbites will be transferred from his ledger to the ledger of the victim, leaving oneself destitute. The Messenger (S) says: "Backbiting annihilates good deeds as fire does dry wood." Perhaps one has one good deed in excess of his bad deeds and his backbiting will add to the weight of the bad deeds in the scales and for that reason go to hell.

The second is that a person should reflect upon his own shortcomings. If he sees his own defects, he will know that that (other) person is as excused for his defects as he is. If he does not know any of his own defects, he should know that ignorance of his own defects is a defect greater than all other defects. Then, if he is speaking the truth,[1156] there is no defect greater than eating carrion flesh, so why does he create a shortcoming for his flawless self?[1157] He should busy himself with gratitude (to God) and know that if he attributes some shortcoming to a person in an act, no servant (of God) is devoid of shortcomings. Since he himself cannot be true to the limits of the Law—even if all of his lapses be minor—and cannot correct himself, why should he be surprised by others? If there is some defect in someone's creation,[1158] he should know that the defect was put there by the Maker and (the person) is not responsible for it and should not be criticized for it.

AS FOR THE PARTICULARS OF THE TREATMENT, they are that one look to see what it is that keeps him backbiting. That is no more than eight things:

The first (cause) is that he is angry with that person for some reason. He must comprehend that his being carried off to hell because of his anger at someone is foolishness, for he has contended with himself! The Messenger (S) says: "On the Day of Resurrection God Most High says to whoever swallows his anger: 'Choose as many as thou canst from the fair-eyed ones of heaven.'"

The second cause is that he seeks the approval of others in order to obtain their satisfaction. The treatment of this is to know that obtaining the wrath of God Most High for the satisfaction of people is foolishness and ignorance. Rather, he should seek the satisfaction of God Most High by being angry at them and disapproving of them.

The third cause is that he has been caught in some crime and imputes it to another in order to save himself. He ought to know that the calamity of God Most High's ire, which is certain, is much greater than that which he avoids.[1159] Saving himself is a supposition, while the anger

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[1156] About his own lack of defects.

[1157] Backbiting has already been likened several times to eating the flesh of the dead.

[1158] That is, a congenital or accidental physical defect beyond one's control.

[1159] That is, the displeasure of people.

of God Most High will be the certain result in time. He must defend himself and not impute another. Someone may say: "Even if I consume the forbidden or accept the coin of the ruler, so-and-so does the same thing!" This is stupidity; it is not right to follow someone into sin. What excuse is there in saying that? If thou seest a person walking into a fire, thou wilt not follow him. Agreement in sin is the same as that. Therefore, by reason of thine uttering a false excuse, why shouldst thou commit the sin of another and (also) backbite?

The fourth cause is that when a person desires to praise himself, but he cannot. He backbites others so as to display his own virtue and purity. As when one says: "So-and-so does not understand anything. So-and-so does not keep away from women." That is, *I* do! One should know that from such (words) that whoever has the faculty of reason believes in his corruption and ignorance, and not in his virtue and piety. And what is the benefit of the credence of someone who is brainless? Indeed, he makes himself a loser to God Most High in order to gain something from a wretch in whose hands there is nothing!

The fifth cause is the envy of someone's rank, knowledge, or wealth, and of the good faith people have in him. He cannot endure that. He starts to search out defects until he will have quarreled with him. He does not realize that he is quarreling with himself, for he will be in the torment of envy in this world and will be in the torment for backbiting in the next world too, thus depriving himself of the blessings of both stopping places. He does not know even this much: that for whomever rank and retinue have been apportioned (by destiny), the envy of the envious increases that rank.

The sixth cause is ridicule, to defame someone by laughter and sport. He does not realize that he is defaming himself before God Most High first, then before people. If thou reflect that he will place his sins upon thy shoulders[1160] on the Day of Resurrection, and drive thee as though thou were an ass to hell, thou knowest that thou art better than that thou be an object of ridicule, and thou knowest that the person whose condition will be this (in the Hereafter), if he be rational, would not engage in laughter and sport.

The seventh cause is that (the object of backbiting) is guilty of some sin and (the backbiter) becomes saddened (about that) for the sake of God Most High, as is the custom of the religious, and that he is truthful in that sadness. However, in talking about it, he mentions the name (of the sinner), remaining unaware that that is backbiting and not knowing that Iblis envied him because he knew that there would be a spiritual reward for that sorrow. (Iblis) drove the name of that person

[1160] "shoulders": literally, "neck."

onto (the backbiter's) tongue so that the backbiting would cause that reward to be lost.

The eighth cause is that he be angered at someone for the sake of God Most High for some sin that that person has committed, or he is astonished at him, and during that astonishment or anger he utters his name so that the people learn of it. That causes the loss of the spiritual reward for his (righteous) anger. Instead, he should not mention the name of the person when talking about his anger or astonishment.

Disclosing the Allowed Excuses in Backbiting

Know that backbiting is forbidden as lying. It does not become permitted except when compelled by necessity. There are six excuses:

THE FIRST EXCUSE is when complaining of injustice before a ruler or a judge. This is lawful, as it is when one is seeking someone's help. However, it is not right for the oppressed person to tell someone from whom there can be no help about the injustice of the oppressor. Someone was talking about the tyranny of Hajjaj[1161] in the presence of (Ibn) Sirin (R). (Sirin) said: "God Most High will take vengeance on the person who backbites Hajjaj, just as he will take vengeance on Hajjaj for the people (he has oppressed)."

THE SECOND EXCUSE is that if one sees some corruption some place, he informs someone able to enforce morality and stop it. 'Umar passed by Talhah or 'Uthman. He greeted him, but it was not answered. He complained to Abu Bakr (R) telling him about that, and this was not held to be backbiting.

THE THIRD EXCUSE is to request a religious decree, as when one says: "My wife or father or some person does this to me." It is better that he say: "What dost thou say if a some person does this?" However, it is permitted for the name to be mentioned, for it may be that some solution will occur to the expounder of the Law should he know the circumstances exactly. Hind[1162] said to the Messenger (S): "Abu Sufyan is a miserly man. He does not provide enough for me and my children. If I take something without his knowledge, would it be lawful?" He replied: "Take just as much as is sufficient for thy sustenance." Relating the oppression of the children and miserliness is backbiting, but the Messenger (S) deemed it lawful with his judgment.

[1161] Hajjaj: al-Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf. A teacher in Ta'if, he was appointed governor of Arabia in AH73-4/692CE and of Iraq in AH75-6/694CE. He was famous for his ability and notorious for his severity. He died AH95/714CE.

[1162] Hind, the daughter of 'Utbah. She died in AH 14/635-6CE.

THE FOURTH EXCUSE is to warn others of someone's evil, as when a person is a heretic or a thief and people will put their confidence in him, or he will seek a woman in marriage, or he wishes to purchase a slave. (The informant) knows that if he does not disclose that person's defect, someone may be harmed. It is better that he tell about that defect, for keeping it hidden would be a defect in being compassionate for Muslims. This is the authority for the certifier of purity[1163] to accuse during testimony. The same (is true) of the person who is consulted. The Messenger (S) has said: "Tell whatever there is about a corrupt person so that the people may be wary of him." This is the practice when there is the fear of a harm.[1164] However, without this excuse, such speaking is not lawful. It is said that there is no backbiting with respect to three persons: the tyrannical ruler, the heretic, and the person is openly corrupt. This is because those people do not conceal (what they do) and do not become distressed by anyone's talking about it.

THE FIFTH EXCUSE is that a person be well known by some epithet (relating to a physical defect), such as A'mash (Bleary-eyed), A'raj (Lame), etc., for he has become well known by that and does not take offense. It is preferred that he be addressed by another name, to call a blind man: "O Seeing One!" or "O One with the Closed Eyes!" and the like.

THE SIXTH EXCUSE is that the debauchery be open, such as the effeminate, the haunter of taverns, and those persons who are not ashamed of their dissoluteness. Mentioning them is lawful.

THE ATONEMENT FOR BACKBITING

Know that the atonement for backbiting is that one repent and be regretful in order to come out from under the requital due God Most High and to seek that person's pardon in order to come out from under the requital that person is due. The Messenger (S) says: "One should seek a pardon from whoever is due a requital for damage to reputation or property before the day comes on which there is neither dirham nor dinar. There will be nothing but one's good deeds to give in return to the claimant. If there are none, then that person's bad deeds will be placed upon him." 'Ayishah (R) told a woman that she was rude. The Messenger (S) said: "Thou hast slandered her. Seek her pardon."

In the Traditions, it is related that anyone who backbites a person must seek forgiveness from God Most High. Some suppose from this

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[1163] "certifier of purity" (*muzakkī*): an official whose responsibility was to testify to the correctness and justice of testimony before a judge.

[1164] A calamity such as a plague or blight.

Tradition that this is sufficient and (that person's) absolution need not be sought. But, on the authority of other Traditions, this is an error. However, this asking of forgiveness is for (the situation) in which the (injured) person is no longer living. (If he is alive), one must ask his forgiveness. Absolution is that one go to him humbly and with regret, and say: "I have erred and I have lied. Forgive me." If (that person) does not, one must praise him and attend him until his heart is gladdened and he grants absolution. If he does not, it is his right, but one's attendance upon (the backbitten) will be written down among one's good deeds. It may be that, instead, (the absolution) will be given at the Resurrection. However, forgiving is better.

There were some of the forefathers who would not grant absolution. They would say: "There is no good deed in our register greater than this."[1165] Nevertheless the correct view is that forgiving is a good deed excelling that. Some one backbit Hasan Basri (R). (Hasan) sent him a tray of fresh dates and said: "I heard that thou hast sent (the merit of) thine own worship to me as a gift, and I too wished to return the favor. Hold me excused that I was not able to return the favor completely." Know that absolution is correct when one says: "What I have said,"[1166] for being absolved for the unknown is not correct.

THE THIRTEENTH HARM is talebearing and calumniation. God Most High says: *Defamer, going about with slander.* (Q. 68:11) And He says: *Woe to every slanderer, defamer!* (Q. 104:1) And He says: *The bearer of slander.* Q. 111:4) In all of these, He intends calumniation.

The Messenger (S) said: "The calumniator will not enter Paradise." And he said: "I tell you who the worst of you are: the persons who bear tales among people, disturb them, and incite them one against another." And he said: "When God Most High created Paradise, He said (to it): 'Speak!' It said: 'Happy is the person who reaches me.' God Most High said: 'By My Might and Glory, eight persons shall not enter thee: the winebibber, the adulterer who persists in that, the calumniator, the complaisant cuckold, the agent of (unjust) authority, the effeminate, the person who cuts himself off from his kin, and the one who says: "I have sworn by God to do something" and does not do it.'"

In the Traditions, it is related: "The children of Israel were afflicted with a drought. They offered prayers for rain repeatedly, but rain did not come. Then it was revealed to Moses (A): 'I do not respond to your supplications because there is amongst you a calumniator.' (Moses) asked: 'Lord God, who is he that I may expel him from among

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[1165] By not granting absolution (in this thinking), they would retain the spiritual reward of having been wronged by the backbiting and lies.

[1166] That is, one should specify the offense. AA has "what I have done" instead of "what I have said."

us?' ((God) said: 'I have enmity with the calumniator. Should I Myself utter calumnies?' Moses (A) told all to repent, then God Most High sent rain."

It is said that someone sought a wise man and traveled seven hundred parasangs[1167] to ask him: "What is more spacious than the sky? What is heavier than the earth? What is harder than stone? What is hotter than fire? What is colder than the intense cold of winter?[1168] What is more powerful than the sea? And what is more wretched than the orphan?" The sage said: "Calumny is heavier than the earth. God is more spacious than the sky. The soul of the contented is more powerful than the sea. Envy is hotter than fire. The need for unfaithful kin is colder than winter. The soul of the unbeliever is harder than stone. And the calumniator, whose words are not heard, is more wretched than the orphan."

Excursus: [What Should Be Done With a Calumniator?][1169]

Know that calumniation does not include all talk with one another. Rather, the talebearer is one who discloses some matter that will cause sorrow to another, whether by word, deed, or any other (method), whether one reveals it by word, gesture, or writing. Indeed, lifting the veil from something that will cause sorrow to a person is not right except when he secretly betrays the property of a person. It is lawful to disclose this. The same is true for everything that will cause harm or loss to Muslims. Anyone told that so-and-so said this about thee, or is devising this with respect to thee, or the like, should do six things:

The first is that one should not believe it, for the talebearer is a lewd person. God Most High says: "Listen not to the word of the lewd."

The second is that one counsel him and forbid this sin, for forbidding the bad is a duty.

The third is that one should consider him an enemy for the sake of God Most High. Enmity with the calumniator is a duty

The fourth is that one not be suspicious of (the subject of the calumny), for (such) suspicion is forbidden.

The fifth is that one should not investigate to learn the truth of the matter, for God Most High has prohibited that.

The sixth is that one not approve for someone else that which one would not approve of for oneself. One should not repeat the calumniator's tale to others and should keep it hidden. All six of these are duties.

[1167] Seven hundred parasangs: about 2,100 miles.

[1168] "the intense cold of early winter" (*zamharir*): the forty days following the winter solstice; also, the moon, which was a metaphor for coldness.

[1169] Heading from the AA text.

Someone was calumniating in the presence of 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz (R). He said: "I shall look to see whether thou hast told a lie and art of the people referred to in the verse '*if an unrighteous man brings you news...*' (Q. 49:6), or if thou speakest the truth and art of the people referred to in the verse '*defamer, going about with slander...*' (Q. 68:11) But if thou wishest, repent so that I may forgive thee." He said: "I repent, O Commander of the Believer! Forgive me!"

Someone said to a sage: "So-and-so has said such-and-such about thee." (The sage) said: "Thou hast come to visit and thou hast committed three betrayals: Thou hast made a brother unpleasant in my soul; thou hast distracted my soul from tranquillity; and thou hast made thyself a lewd and accused person before me."

Someone said to Sulayman bin 'Abd al-Malik: "Hast thou said anything about me?" He answered: "No, I have not." (The other) said: "A trustworthy, just person has related that." Zuhri[1170] was sitting (there). He said: "O Commander of the Believers! A calumniator is not just." He said: "Thou hast spoken the truth."

Hasan Basri (R) said: "Whoever brings a tale about someone to thee, carries tales about thee to others. Beware of him! In truth, one ought to hold him an enemy. His action is talebearing. It is perfidy and treachery. It is spite and envy. It is hypocrisy, meddling, and deceit. All of these are treachery. It is said that truth is good from every person save the talebearer and the slanderer. Mus'ab bin al-Zubayr[1171] (R) says: "For us, the acceptance of slander is worse than the slander, for calumniation is the indication and acceptance is the permission."

The Messenger (S) said: "Slander is not a legitimate child."

Know that the evil of the calumniator and the meddler is enormous and it may be the cause of bloodshed. Someone was selling a slave, saying: "He has no defect except that he calumniates and meddles." That person said: "No problem," and he bought him. After a few days, that slave said to his master's wife: "The master does not love thee and wants to buy a concubine. Now, when the master is sleeping, take a razor and cut off some hairs from under his throat so that I can perform some magic for thee to make him thy lover." And he said to his master: "Thy wife is in love with another and wants to kill thee. Pretend to be asleep and thou wilt see!" The master pretended to be asleep. His wife came with a razor in her hand. She sat by the master's pillow and pulled his beard back to cut some hairs. No doubt was left to the master but that she was about to murder him. He jumped up and killed his wife. When they heard, the wife's tribe came to the master and killed the

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[1170] Zuhri: A reference to Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Muslim (AH 57-124/c.676-742CE).

[1171] Muṣ'ab bin al-Zubayr: An important provincial governor of the early Islamic period. (Fihrist)

master in retribution for the woman. There were many relatives from both tribes and then they fell upon each other. Many were slain from both sides in the battle because of the evil of (the slave's) calumnies.

THE FOURTEENTH HARM is being two-faced between two enemies, speaking with each one in order to please him. It may be that he relate what one says to the other and vice versa and pretend friendship to both. This is worse than calumniation. The Messenger (S) said: "For whoever is double-tongued in this world, there will be two fiery tongues in the next." And he said: "The worst of the servants of God Most High is two-faced."

Therefore, know that whoever mixes with two enemies must be silent about all that he hears or speak the truth in the presence of that person or in his absence in order not to be a hypocrite. He should not tell either one what the other says, nor should he show himself to be a supporter of each of them.

Ibn 'Umar (R) was told: "We approach princes and speak to them in a way that we do not speak when we come away." He said: "We counted this as hypocrisy during the time of the Messenger. Whoever has no pressing need to visit rulers and says things that he would not say later is a hypocrite and two-faced. There is a leniency in this regard if there be a pressing need."

THE FIFTEENTH HARM is praising, eulogizing, and extolling people (in the hope of reward). There six harms in this: four for the speaker and two for the listener who is praised.

As for the harms for the *PRAISER*:

One is that he overpraises and lies, thus becoming a liar. It is written that: "Whoever exaggerates in the praise of people will have a long tongue at the Resurrection so that it drags on the ground and he is continually stepping on it and stumbling on it."

The second is that there may be hypocrisy in it and that, by praising, he feigns a love which he does not have.

The third is that he may say something (about the subject of his eulogy) which he does not truly know, (using words) such as: pious, abstemious, learned, and the like. Someone praised a man in the presence of the Messenger. The Messenger (S) said: "Woe unto thee! Thou hast beheaded him!" Then, he said: "If thou must eulogize someone, say: 'I think that it is thus, but I do not vouch for a person by God Most High.' Then his accounting is with God Most High, if he thinks and speaks the truth."

The fourth is that the praised person is an oppressor and he becomes pleased by the words (of the eulogizer). It is not proper to

gladden an oppressor. The Messenger (S) said: "When a lewd person is extolled, God Most High becomes angry at that (extoller)."

And for the *PRAISED*, there are two kinds of harm:

One is that he will become proud and conceited. 'Umar (R) was sitting one day with his whip (in hand). A man (called) Jarud[1172] approached. Someone said: "He is the chief of the (tribe of) Rabi'ah." When he had sat down, 'Umar struck him with a blow of the whip. (Jarud) said: "O Commander of the Believers, what is this for?" ('Umar) said: "Didst thou not hear what that man said?" (Jarud) answered: "I heard him. Now what has happened?" ('Umar) said: "I was afraid that something would happen in thy soul. I wanted to break thy pride."

The other is that when he hears himself praised for righteousness and wisdom, he will become lazy in the future and say: "I have achieved perfection." It was concerning this at the time someone was being praised in his presence, the Messenger (S) said: "Thou hast beheaded him. If he hears it, he will not prosper any more." The Messenger (S) said: "If a person approaches a person with a sharp knife, it is better than if he praised him face to face." Ziyad bin Aslam[1173] (R) says: "Satan will approach whoever hears himself praised and snatch him away. If he is a believer who knows himself, he will be humble."

However, if there is no chance for these six banes, then eulogizing is good. The Messenger (S) has praised the Companions. He said: "O 'Umar, if I had not been sent to the people, thou wouldst have been sent." And he said: "If the faith of all the world were placed against the faith of Abu Bakr, his faith would be greater;" and the likes of these. He knew that they would not be harmed by it.

Nevertheless, self-praise is blameworthy, for God Most High has prohibited it: *So ascribe not purity to yourselves.* (Q. 53:32) It is lawful if a person is the leader of a people and he describes his own circumstances so that they obtain the grace of his leadership, as the Messenger (S) said: "*I am the lord of the children of Adam without bragging.*" That is: "I do not boast of this lordship. I boast that this was given to me." He said this so that all would follow him. Joseph (A) said (to Pharaoh): *"Place me over the treasures of the land; surely I am a good keeper, knowing well."* (Q. 12:55)

[1172] Jārūd: a reference to Bishr bin al-Mundhir bin al-Jarud (d. AH 83/702-3CE). He was known as Ibn al-Jarud (the son of Jarud), but in fact was Jarud's grandson. (HK)

[1173] Ziyād bin Aslam: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

EXCURSUS: [WHAT THINGS ARE INCUMBENT UPON THE PRAISED ONE][1174]

Consequently, when a person is eulogized, he must be wary of arrogance and conceit and meditate upon the danger of the End, for no one knows that. A dog or a pig is better than anyone who is not saved from hell. No one knows that he will be saved.

He must reflect that if the eulogizer knew all of (the eulogized one's) secrets, he would not sing his praises. (The praised one) should busy himself with giving thanks that God Most High has hidden his inner self from (the eulogizer). He should display disapproval when he is praised and should feel that disapproval in his heart too.

One of the saints was being praised. He said: "O Lord God! They do not know me. Thou ever knowest me." Another was being praised. He said: "O Lord God! This man is striving to draw near to me with that thing which Thou holdest in enmity. Thou art my witness that I am striving to draw near to Thee with enmity to him." 'Ali bin Abi Talib (R) was being eulogized. He said: "O Lord, do not ascribe to me what they are saying. Forgive that which they do not know about me. And make me better than that which they think." Someone disliked 'Ali (R) and praised him hypocritically. 'Ali (R) said: "I am less than that which thou art saying and more than that which thou hast in thy heart."

[1174] Heading from the AA text.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCERNING ANGER, HATRED, ENVY; (THEIR) DETRIMENTS, [AND THEIR TREATMENT]

1. [CONCERNING ANGER]

Know that when anger is dominant, it is a reprehensible trait. Its origin is the fire of the injury of which is on the soul. It is ascribed to Satan, who spoke thus: *"Thou hast created me of fire and him Thou didst create of mud."* (Q. 38:76) The effect of fire is motion and restlessness, while the effect of clay is calm and tranquillity. The relationship to Satan of whoever is dominated by anger is more apparent than his relationship to Adam. It is for this that Ibn 'Umar (R) asked the Messenger (S): "What is that thing which will keep me away from the anger of God Most High?" He said: "That thou not grow angry." And he said to the Messenger (S): "Tell me some act that is simple and hope-giving."[1175] (The Messenger) said: *"Do not anger!"* As often as (Ibn 'Umar) repeated the question, (the Messenger) gave the same answer. And the Messenger (S) said: "Anger is as destructive to faith as aloes is to grapes." Jesus (A) said to a monk: "Do not become angry." (The monk) replied: "I am not capable of that, as I am human." (Jesus) said: "Do not accumulate wealth." (The monk) said: "I am capable of that."

Know that since it is not possible to become completely devoid of the element of anger, suppressing it is a great feat. *God Most High said: ...And those who control their wrath and are forgiving toward mankind...* (Q. 3:134) He praised those persons who suppress their anger. And the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High controls His punishment for whoever controls his anger. Whenever he begs forgiveness from God Most High, He accepts it. And God Most High covers the shame of whoever restrains his tongue." And he said: "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High fills the soul of anyone who has the ability to control his anger with contentment when aroused." And he said: "There is a gate to hell which no one enters save the person who gives rein to his anger contrary to the Law." And he said: "Nothing swallowed by His servant is more pleasing to God Most High than anger. None will swallow that save the one whose heart has been filled with faith by God Most High."

Fudayl (bin) Iyad, Sufyan Thawri, and a company of the saints (R) are in agreement that there are no acts better than mildness at the moment of anger and forbearance at the time of craving.

[1175] "hope-giving": that is, something that will give him hope on the Day of Resurrection.

Someone was speaking harshly to 'Umar bin 'Abd al-Aziz. ('Umar) looked down and said: "Didst thou wish to enrage me so that Satan may cause me to rise out of pride and sovereignty and give rein to my anger against thee this day so that thou may give rein to thy retaliation tomorrow? That shall never happen!" And he remained silent.

A prophet (A) said: "Who will accept this from me and undertake not to become wrathful and become my successor after my death and be my equal in Paradise?" Someone said: "I shall give the undertaking and accept it." (The prophet) repeated what he had said and the man also said that he accepted the terms. He was faithful to his word and became his successor. His was called "Holder of the Pledge"[1176] because he had given that pledge; that is, he had accepted it.

Excursus: [The Root of Anger Will Never Be Uprooted From the Inner Being][1177]

Know that anger has been created in a person so as to be his weapon in order to stop anything harmful to him, just as appetite was created to be his tool to draw what is beneficial to himself. There is no escape from both of these. However, when they are in excess, they become harmful, resembling a fire which burns in the heart, its smoke rising to the brain, darkening the dwelling of reason and thought so that one does not see the way of right action, just as when smoke enters a cave it makes things so dark that nothing can be seen. This is very reprehensible. Concerning this, it has been said that anger is the ogre of reason.

It may happen that this anger is weak. That, too, is reprehensible, for the zeal against the forbidden and the enthusiasm for religion against unbelievers arises from (the impulse) of anger. God Most High said to the Messenger (S): *Strive against the unbelievers and the hypocrites! Be harsh with them!* (Q. 9:73) (God) praised the Companions and said: *(And those with him) are hard against the unbelievers.* (Q. 48:29) All of these are outcome of anger. Therefore, the faculty of anger must not be excessive, nor must it be weak. Rather, it should be balanced and under the direction of reason and religion.

Some have thought that the objective of asceticism is the rooting out of anger. That is an error, for anger is a weapon and there is no escaping it. The elimination of the impulse of anger is impossible as long as a person is alive, just as the elimination of the impulse of appetite is impossible. However, it is lawful to conceal it in certain acts and at

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[1176] "Holder of the Pledge" *Dhūl-Kifl*: mentioned in the Quran (Q. 21:87 and 38:48). Commentators have identified him variously with Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Obadiah amongst the Old Testament prophets.

[1177] From the AA text.

certain times so that someone may suppose that there is absolutely no anger. The explanation of this is that the anger arises from someone's attempt to take away something that one needs. However, if there is no need for it, as, for example, a dog that is superfluous, should someone beat or kill it, it is right not to become angered.

But, as for food, residence, clothing, health, and the like, the need for them never ends. Consequently, (if) a person injures these, resulting in a loss of one's well-being, or takes one's food or clothing, anger will necessarily appear. So, the anger of him whose need is greater will be greater and he will be more helpless and impoverished; for freedom lies in needlessness. However much one's need is greater, the nearer one is to slavery. It is possible that a person, through self-discipline, make himself so that his needs are reduced to the absolutely necessary. This results in the elimination from himself of the need for rank, property, and the excesses of the world. Anger will necessarily will follow those needs and depart. For that reason, the person who is not seeking rank is not angered by anyone who has advanced ahead of him or who sits above him in assemblies.

There are great differences among people in this respect, for most anger is connected with the increase of wealth and rank, so that it may happen that a person will boast of something worthless such as chess, backgammon, pigeon-flying, and the excessive drinking of wine. If someone says that he does not play chess well, or he does not drink a lot of wine, he will become angry. There is no doubt that whoever is of this kind can be saved by abstention (from those things). However, that which is certain for man is that the impulse of anger does not become eliminated and that itself should not happen, nor is it praiseworthy. However, it must not be thus that it deprives a person of his self-control and overpowers his reason and the Law. By self-discipline, one may return anger to this degree. The proof that the impulse of anger does not vanish, nor should it do so, is that the Messenger (S) was not lacking in anger. He said: "I am a human being. *I anger as people anger*. I become angry just as a human being becomes angry. Whomever I would curse, or speak harshly to in anger, or strike, O Lord God, turn that into a cause of my mercy upon him."

'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As[1178] (R) said: "O Messenger of God: "Should I write down all that thou sayest?" He said: "Write it

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[1178] ᶜAbdullāh bin ᶜAmr bin al-ᶜĀs: a Companion of the Prophet who embraced Islam before his father. (His father would become the famous conqueror and governor of Egypt who died AH43/664CE.) 'Abdullah was famous for his piety and his asceticism, to the extent that the Prophet himself asked him to moderate his devotions. He fought against 'Ali in the civil war between the Umayyads and the supporters of 'Ali, but when 'Ammar was killed, he regretted his participation. Later, he befriended Husayn bin 'Ali. He died at the age of 72.

down, even though I be angry. By that God Who sent me to mankind with the truth, even when I am angry, I utter nothing but the truth." Thus, he did not say: "I have no anger." Instead, he said: "My anger does not take me outside of truth."

One day 'Ayishah (R) was angry. The Messenger (S) said: "Thy devil has come!" She said: "And dost thou not have a devil?" He replied: "Yes, but God Most High aids me against him so that he is under my control. He does not say anything except the good." He did not say: "I do not have a devil of anger."

Excursus: [The Triumph of God's Unity Conceals Anger][1179]

Know that even though the root of anger can never be rooted out from the inner being, yet it is right that a person be dominated by God's Unity in some conditions—or most conditions—and consider everything that happens as though it were from God Most High. Then anger is cloaked by God's Unity and nothing of one's own is seen. Just as when someone is struck by a stone, in no circumstance does he become angry at the stone, even if the root of anger is entrenched in his inner being, for the stone did not assault him. It was caused by the person who threw the stone. If a ruler signs an order for someone's execution, that person does not become angry at the pen with which the signature was written, because he knows that the pen is employed (by the ruler) and that the pen did not move of itself, even though it moved.[1180]

Likewise, a person who is dominated by God's Unity necessarily recognizes that all mankind are forced by necessity in that which occurs to them. Indeed, even though movement is controlled by power, yet power is controlled by the will and controlled by desire. The will is not at the disposal of a person. Rather, (it is) a desire that has been imposed upon him, willingly or unwillingly. When the desire has been sent and the power given, the act will necessarily be accomplished. Therefore, it is like the stone which has been thrown at him. The stone causes pain and suffering, but he does not become angry at the stone. Thus, if his sustenance comes from a sheep and the sheep dies, he is troubled but he does not become wrathful. Should someone kill the sheep, it must be the same (to him) if the light of God's Unity dominates.

However, the triumph of God's Unity is not continuous at that limit. Instead, it is light a flash of lighting. Human nature becomes apparent in (its) attention to the extant causes. Many people are like that in some circumstances. It is not that the root of anger has been extirpated. When the human perpetrator is not seen, the sorrow of anger

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[1179] From the AA text.

[1180] HK has the next paragraph beginning another excursus, but AA's text does not make this division, continuing without interruption. We follow AA here.

does not appear. It is like the stone which hits him. Indeed, it may be that there is no victory of God's Unity involved. Rather, one's soul is so engaged in a more important work that the anger is obscured and does not become apparent.

A person execrated Salman (R) (to his face). (Salman) said: "If at the Resurrection the pan of my bad deeds (on the scales of judgment) is heavier, I am worse than what thou sayest. If it is lighter than what thou sayest, what have I to fear?" Someone cursed Rabi' Khaytham. (Rabi') said: "Between me and heaven there is an obstruction which I am busy cutting. If I cut it away, what have I to fear from thy words? If I do not, what thou sayest is less (bad) than I am." Both of them were so immersed in thinking about the Hereafter that their anger did not show itself.

[A person was imprecating Abu Bakr Siddiq (R). (Abu Bakr) said: "There is much more that is hidden from thee." He was so involved with himself that his anger did not appear.][1181] Someone doubted Malik Dinar (R). (Malik) said: "No one has (truly) known me except thee." Someone said something to Sha'bi (R). (Sha'bi) said: "If thou speakest the truth, may God Most High forgive me. If thou liest, may God Most High forgive thee."

So, these states show that it is permissible for anger to be suppressed by these states. And, it is permissible that one who loves God Most High not become angry with someone unknown. When a cause occurs, the love for God Most High covers his anger. Just as when someone has a beloved who speaks ill of (the lover's) child. The lover knows that he wants no unkindness to befall his child, but he overlooks it. The triumph of his love is such that he does not take offense at that unkindness and does not become angry.

Therefore, a person must deal with any of these provocations so that he stifle his anger. If he cannot, he must indeed defeat this impulse so that it not become intractable and act contrary to the Law and reason.

Excursus: [The Treatment of Anger Is Obligatory][1182]

Know that the treatment of anger and its discipline are religious obligations, for (anger) carries most people off to hell and from it many sins are born. Its treatment is of two kinds: The similitude of one (kind) is that of the purgative which tears out its roots and material from within. The similitude of the other is that of oxymel[1183] which soothes and does not carry away matter. As for the purgative, it is that one search out what

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[1181] This anecdote is taken from the AA text.
[1182] From the AA text.
[1183] Oxymel: a mixture of vinegar and honey

the internal cause of anger is, tear out its causes by the root; and the causes are five:

THE FIRST CAUSE is pride. For the proud person angers at minor lapses of word or treatment against the respect (he feels he is due). This anger must be defeated with humility, and one must understand that one is of the same genus as other servants (of God). Any superiority is of good character. Pride is a bad trait and cannot be expunged save by humility.

THE SECOND CAUSE is the vanity in which one is self-absorbed. The remedy is to know oneself. All of the treatments for pride and vanity will be discussed in the appropriate place.

THE THIRD CAUSE is jesting which, in most circumstances, leads to anger. One must busy oneself seriously with becoming acquainted with the Hereafter, acquiring a good character, and refraining from frivolity. In the same way, excessive laughter and mockery lead to anger. One must protect oneself from these, for whoever mocks others is mocked himself. Therefore, if another mocks him, he has mocked himself.

THE FOURTH CAUSE is casting blame and faultfinding. They also become causes of anger for both sides. Its remedy is that one know that whoever is not without fault should not blame others. No one is without fault.

THE FIFTH CAUSE is the avarice and greed for the increase of property and rank, for with that, need becomes great. Whoever is a miser becomes angry when a single grain is taken from him. Whoever is greedy becomes angry if one bite of food is lost to him. All of these are bad traits of character and the roots of anger.

[THE THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TREATMENT OF ANGER]

The treatment of all of these is theoretical and practical.

As for the theoretical, it is that one understand its detriment and evil, and the amount of damage it does to him in worldly affairs and in religion, so that it will become repugnant to him in his soul. Then, he must occupy himself with the practical treatment. This is so the he will become changed so as to rise up against these traits, for the treatment of all characteristics is opposition (to them), as we have discussed concerning self-discipline.[1184]

A major cause for the provocation of anger and bad traits is association with people who are overcome by their anger. It may be that they call this bravery and steadfastness and take pride in it and tell

[1184] See Chapter 1 above, in this Pillar.

stories: "Such-and-such a great man killed someone for a word and destroyed so-and-so's house and belongings and no one had the courage[1185] to say anything against him, because he is a manly man, and men are thus!" Overlooking (slights) is considered self-contempt, dastardly, and unmanly. So they call anger—which is the characteristic of dogs—manliness and bravery; and mildness—which is the characteristic of (God's) messengers—they call dastardly and unmanly!

This is the work of Satan who, with deception and ugly words, keeps (them) away from a good character and, with pleasant words, invites (them) to a bad character. An intelligent person would know that if the arousal of anger were a part of manliness, then would not women, children, feeble oldsters, and the sick be closer to anger? It is obvious that those people anger more quickly. Indeed, there is no manliness greater than that one confront one's own anger. This is the attribute of the prophets and saints. The other: that is the attribute of Kurds, Turks, and (desert) Arabs, and of people who are closer to predatory animals and beasts. Keep looking to see whether greatness is that which resembles the prophets or that which resembles fools and the negligent!

EXCURSUS: [THE THEORETICAL TREATMENT]

That which has been said is a purgative, its purpose to void the substance of anger. So, that person who cannot root out that substance must calm it when anger is excited. It may be calmed by an oxymel compounded of the sweetness of knowledge and the bitterness of patience. The treatment for all (personal) traits is a compound of knowledge and action. However, the knowledge is that of the verses (of the Quran) and the Traditions (of the Prophet) which have come down about censuring anger and the spiritual merit for the person who suppresses his anger, reconsiders—as we have described—and says to himself: "God Most High has more power over thee than thou hast over Him, and God's repugnance for thee is greater than thy repugnance for (the person who incites thine anger). If thou givest rein to thine anger (against that person), what surety dost thou have that at the Resurrection He will not give rein to His anger against thee?" As when the Messenger (S) sent a serving girl on an errand and she returned late. He said: "If it were not for the retaliation at the Resurrection, I would have beaten thee."

Another is that one say to oneself: "Thine anger is because the affair proceeded the way God Most High wished, not the way thou didst. This is contending with the Godhead." If thine anger is not stilled with

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[1185] "courage" (*zahrah*), literally: gall bladder, boldness. More colloquially, one might say: "no one had the guts to say anything..."

these reasons which are related to the Hereafter, one should marshal worldly motives and say: "If I give rein to my anger, it may happen that he too will be prompted to opposition and retaliate. One should not minimize one's enemy. If, for example, he is a slave who is deficient in service, when he becomes frightened, he may meditate some treachery or conspiracy."

One should also recall one's own ugly image (when angry). How ugly and variable the exterior becomes! It becomes the image of a wolf attacking a person, and its interior becomes all aflame, in the image of a ravenous dog. It usually happens that when one intends to overlook (the offense), Satan says to him: "This will be attributed to thy weakness and baseness, and will detract from thy dignity. Thou wilt be held in contempt by the people." One must reply: "No glory comes from that. For a person should take the way of the prophets and seek the pleasure of God Most High. It is better that people despise me in this world today than that I be despised at the Resurrection tomorrow." These and the their like are the theoretical treatment.

[The Practical Treatment]

As for the practical treatment, it is that one say aloud: *I seek refuge with God from the accursed Satan.* The Practice of the Prophet) is that if one is standing one should sit, and if one is sitting, one should lay one's side on the ground. If one does not become calmed by this, one should purify himself with cold water, for the Messenger (S) said: "Anger is of (the nature of) fire; it is extinguished with water." According to one narrative, one should prostrate oneself, placing one's face on the earth in order to realize with that (gesture) that one has come from the earth and is a servant (of God) and so that anger will not touch him. One day 'Umar (R) was angered and called for water. He sniffed it into his nostrils and said: "Anger comes from the devil and departs with this." One day Abu Dharr (R) fought with some one. He said: "*O son of the red woman!*"—he insulted his mother, saying she was ruddy in color; that is, she was a slave. The Messenger said: "I heard that thou didst insult someone today through his mother. Know that thou art not superior to any black or red person, except that thou be more pious than he." Abu Dharr went off to apologize to that person, and that person came and made peace with Abu Dharr.

When 'Ayishah (R) would become angry, the Messenger (S) would take her by the nose and say: "Dear 'Ayishah! Say: *O God, the Lord of the Prophet Muhammad, forgive me for my sin and expel the anger from my heart and keep me from the turmoil of error.*" Saying this is also a Practice (of the Prophet).

EXCURSUS: [HOW MUCH GIVING REIN TO ANGER IS LAWFUL]

Know that if a person does some injustice or utters vulgar or terrifying words (to one), it is preferable to remain silent and not respond. However, remaining silent is not a duty yet, not every response is permissible. Indeed, returning execration for execration and calumny for calumny is not lawful, for such provocations, punishment becomes necessary. But, if someone responds in harsh words in which there is no lie, it is lawful; that resembles a kind of legal requital.

Even though the Messenger (S) has said: "If a person criticizes thee in what is true about thee, do not criticize him with his faults," this is in the way of a recommendation and not offering a response is not an obligation when there is no imprecation or accusation of adultery. The grounds for this are that the Messenger (S) said: "*Two persons reviling each other, what they have said is upon him who was first until the oppressed one surpasses (him).*" He said: "Every two persons who speak unkindly to each other, whatever they say, the one who began is at fault until the injured party exceeds the limits (in his responses). So he should cease replying before he reaches that point."

'Ayishah (R) used to say: "The wives of the Messenger (S) gave Fatimah a message: 'Tell the Messenger to be fair amongst us and 'Ayishah, but thou lovest her more and incline towards her.' The Messenger (S) had been asleep. He said: 'O Fatimah, dost thou not love that which I love?' She said: 'I do.' He said: 'Then love 'Ayishah because I love her.' Then (Fatimah) went to them and repeated what he had said. They said: 'This does not satisfy us.' Zaynab[1186] (R) was one of the Messenger's wives. She claimed to be my equal in the Messenger's (S) love. She was sent by them and said: 'Abu Bakr's daughter does this and that and says unkind things.' I stayed silent in case he might give me permission to reply. When he gave permission, I came in to answer back. I was answering her and speaking unkindly to her until my mouth became dry and she was left helpless. Then the Messenger (S) said: 'She is the daughter of Abu Bakr.' That is: 'Ye will not be able to cope with her with words.'"

So, this is the evidence that answering is lawful when it is right and not a lie, as one says: 'Fool! Ignoramus! Be ashamed of thyself and shut up!" for no person is devoid of foolishness or ignorance. One must train the tongue to be accustomed to using words that are not excessively ugly, so that when one is angry, one not resort to vulgarity, as when one says: "Promise-breaker! Turncoat! Knave! Unworthy! Wretch!" and the

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[1186] Zaynab: Zaynab bint Khuzaymah was the fifth wife of the Prophet. She had been widowed and perhaps divorced previously. She lived only eight months with the Prophet, dying AH4/625CE. She was one of the two of the Prophet's wives to die in his lifetime, the other being his first wife, Khadijah.

like. In short, when it comes to answering back, it is difficult to keep within bounds. For this reason, it is preferred that one not answer back.

Someone was speaking ill of Abu Bakr (R) in the presence of the Messenger (S), who remained silent. When Abu Bakr (R) began to reply, the Messenger (S) rose. (Abu Bakr) said: "Until now thou hast been sitting down. Now that I am about to reply, thou hast risen?" He said: "As long as thou wert silent, an angel was continuously replying on thy behalf. Now that thou hast started to speak, I did not want to sit in the same place with Satan."

And the Messenger (S) said: "Human beings have been created in different classes. There is one who becomes angry slowly and becomes pleased slowly. There is another who becomes angry quickly and becomes pleased quickly. One is the opposite of the other. The best of you is he who becomes angry slowly and becomes pleased quickly. The worst of you is he who becomes angry quickly and becomes pleased slowly."

EXCURSUS: [CONCERNING HATRED]

Know that blessedness follows when someone swallows his anger by means of choice and (the power of) religion. However, if he swallows it by reason of weakness or necessity, it collects inside him and ferments and turns into hatred. The Messenger (S) says: "The believer is not full of hate." Therefore, hatred is the offspring of anger, and from it eight grandchildren are born, each one of which is a cause of the destruction of religion:

First: Envy, so that one is saddened by the happiness of that person and made happy by his sorrow.

Second: Malicious joy,[1187] that a person rejoice when (his enemy) is afflicted with a calamity, and make that apparent.

Third: That one restrain one's tongue and not reply to the other's greeting of "Peace."

Fourth: That one look upon him with hatred and scorn.

Fifth: That one talk about him: backbiting, lying, and insulting; that one lay open that person's private matters and his secrets.

Sixth: That one mimic him and ridicule him.

Seventh: That one strike and injure him when the opportunity occurs, or that one persuade someone else to beat him.

Eighth: That one commit some shortcoming in executing his rights and not honor the connection of kinship, nor repay debts to him, nor turn oppression away from him, nor seek pardon from him.

[1187] "malicious joy" (*shamātat*) rejoicing at someone else's misfortune, the German *schadenfreude*, for which there is no exact single-word English equivalent.

So, if there is a person whom religion dominates, and who does not commit any sins, there is at least this: that he withholds good deeds from him and does not show friendship to him. He does not aid (the other) in his affairs and does not sit with him for the remembrance of God Most High, nor does he offer (the other person) praise and supplications. All of these things detract from (the aggrieved person's) stature, and the harm of this is great. When Mistah,[1188] who was a relative of Abu Bakr, spoke about 'Ayishah, (R) during the Incident of the Lie.[1189] Abu Bakr, who had been paying (Mistah's) stipend, took the money back and swore that he would never give him money again. (At that,) this verse was revealed: *And let not those who possess bounty and plenty among you,* to the place where He said: *Do ye not wish that God should forgive you?* (Q. 24:22)[1190] (The Messenger) said: "Do not swear that ye will not do good to a person who is unkind to you. Do ye not desire to like that God Most High will forgive you?" Abu Bakr (R) said: "By God, I want that!" and he resumed paying the stipend.

Therefore, anyone who harbors a grudge against someone is not free of three concerns: [First], he either struggles against himself in order to do (his enemy) some good deed and increase his consideration—this is the degree of the truly righteous; or [second], he does not do any good deeds, nor any unbecoming deeds—this is the degree of the abstemious; or [third], he does rude things (to him) and does not do any good things—this is the degree of the vicious and the oppressors.

There is no intimacy (with God) greater than this: that thou doest good to the person who does evil to thee. If thou art not able (to do that), at least forgive him; for the virtue of forgiveness is great.

The Messenger (S) said: "There are three things that I may swear to: one is that no property will be lost in (giving) voluntary charity; another is that there is no one who has forgiven a person, upon whom God Most High has not bestowed an increase in honor at the Resurrection; and the third is that no one opens the door of importuning and begging to himself that God Most High does not open the door of

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[1188] Mistah: Mistah was the nickname of 'Awf bin Uthathah. He was one of those who spoke ill of 'Ayishah because of an incident during the expedition against the Banu Mustaliq. Abu Bakr swore to cut off Mistah's stipend, even though he was a relative. At that point, the verse prohibiting the cutting off of relatives was revealed (Q. 24:11) and Abu Bakr, hearing that, continued the stipend.

[1189] "Incident of the Lie": When 'Ayishah's camel fell behind and there was an accusation of impropriety.

[1190] The complete text of Q. 24:24 is as follows: *And let not those of you who possess bounty and plenty among you swear off giving to kinsmen and the poor and those who emigrate in the way of God; but let them pardon and forgive. Do ye not wish that God should forgive you? God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.*

poverty (to him).[1191] And 'Ayishah (R) says: "I never saw the Messenger (S) retaliate against anyone with respect to himself, but if it detracted from the right of God, his anger had no limit. When choosing between two alternatives, he never chose that which was not easier for the people, unless there was some sin in it." 'Uqbah bin 'Amir[1192] (R) used to say: "The Messenger (S) took my hand and said: 'Should I not inform thee what the best behavior of the people of the world and the Hereafter is? That whatever someone takes from thee, thou givest to him;[1193] whatever someone deprives thee of, thou givest to him; and that thou forgivest whoever is unjust to thee."

And the Messenger (S) said that Moses (A) had asked: "O Lord God, who is the more beloved of Thy servants to Thee?" He replied: "He who forgives even though he has the power (to retaliate)." And (Moses) (A) said: "Whoever supplicates (God) for misfortune to his oppressor, negates his own rights."

And when the Messenger (S) conquered Makkah and captured the Quraysh—and they had tormented him very much and they were afraid that they would be executed—he placed his hand on the door of the Ka'bah and said: "God is One and has no partner. He has fulfilled His promise and given aid to His Own servant and has routed His enemies. What do ye see and what do ye say?" They said: "What can we say except 'good'? We await thy generosity. Today the power is thy hands." He said: "I say today that which my brother said. When Yusuf (A) had his brothers in his power, he said: '*No reproach this day shall be upon you. God will forgive you.*'" (Q. 12:92) He granted them all security and said: "No one shall bother you."

And the Messenger (S) said: "When the people stand on the fields of the Resurrection, a herald will cry out: 'Arise! The reward of whoever has forgiven another is with God Most High.' Thousands upon thousands of people shall stand up and enter Paradise without any accounting, for they have forgiven people."

Mu'awiyah (R) would say: "When angry, be patient, so that ye may find a great opportunity. When ye obtain (the opportunity) and great power, forgive." A person who had committed treason was brought before Hisham.[1194] Hisham became angry and said: "Dost thou quarrel in front of me?" He said: "*God Most High has said: On the day when every soul will come disputing for itself.* (Q. 16:111) One may dispute before

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[1191] That is, if one starts to beg and importune, God will open the door of poverty to him.

[1192] ʿUqbah bin ʿĀmir: a Companion of the Prophet. He was one of the Helpers who participated in the first pledge of 'Aqabah.

[1193] "Whatever someone takes from thee, thou givest to him": literally, "Whatever someone cuts off (*biburad*) from thee, thou graftest (*paywandī*) onto him."

[1194] Hisham: Hisham bin 'Abd al-Malik, see Note 810.

God Most High in stating an excuse; why can that not be done in thy presence?" (Hisham) said: "Come and say what thou wert saying."

Something was stolen from Ibn Mas'ud (R). The people were cursing the thief. He said: "O Lord God, if he took it out of some need, let him be blessed by it! If he took for the audaciousness of sinning, let it be his last sin!" Fudayl (bin) 'Iyad (R) says: "I saw a man whose gold was stolen while he was circumambulating (the Ka'bah). He was weeping. I said: 'Art thou weeping because of the gold?' he replied: 'No, I visualized him standing with me at the Resurrection, not having any excuse.' I felt mercy for him." A group of prisoners were brought before 'Abd al-Malik.[1195] One of their chiefs said: "God Most High gave thee what thou lovedst most, and that was victory. Now thou givest what He likes most, and that is forgiveness." And he forgave them all.

Therefore, when anger appears, one must forgive. One must be kind in affairs so that anger itself (has no need to) appear. The Messenger (S) said: "O 'Ayishah, whoever has had a portion of kindness has found his portion of religion and the world. Whoever has been deprived of kindness has remained deprived of the good of the world and religion." And he said: "God Most High is a friend and He loves kindness. That which is given with kindness is never given with harshness." 'Ayishah said: "One should observe kindness in all affairs, for nothing which is touched by kindness does not become adorned by it. Kindness should not be cut off in any matter, lest it turn ugly."

[Concerning Envy] Disclosing Envy and Its Detriments

Know that hatred arises from anger, and envy arises from hatred. Envy is one of the Destroyers. The Messenger (S) said: "Envy consumes good deeds as fire consumes dry wood." And he (S) said: "There are three things of which no one is devoid: suspicion, bad omens, and envy. Let me teach you what their treatment is: When thou art suspicious, make not thyself an investigator and do not fixate upon it. When thou takest a bad omen, do not have confidence in it. When envy appears, restrain thy tongue and hand from having commerce with it." And he (S) said: "That which destroyed many peoples before you has begun to appear among you; that is envy, enmity, and hostility. By the God in Whose command is the soul of Muhammad, ye will not enter heaven so long as ye do not have faith. And ye will not have faith so long as ye do not love one another. Let me inform you how this is achieved: Greet one another with 'peace,' openly."

[1195] ʿAbd al-Malik: the son of caliph Marwān and the fifth Umayyad caliph at Damascus (rgd. AH65-86/685-705CE) and the father of four caliphs including Hisham, see Note 810. He was one of the three most competent caliphs of the dynasty.

Moses (A) saw a man under the shade of the Throne. (Moses) yearned for that man's place and said: "He is one of God's beloved persons." (Moses) asked (God): "Who is he and what is his name?" (God) did not give his name and said: "I shall inform thee of his acts: He never envied another, he never disobeyed his mother and father, and he never calumniated (another)."

Zechariah (A) said: "God Most High says: 'The envier is the enemy of My bounty. He becomes angry at My decrees and does not like the apportioning that I have made amongst (My) servants."

The Messenger (S) said: "Six classes of people go to hell for six sins without any reckoning: oppressive rulers, partisan Arabs,[1196] the prideful rich, deceiving merchants, ignorant villagers, and envious scholars."

Anas[1197] (R) says: "One day I was sitting with the Messenger (S). He said: 'This moment one of the people of heaven will enter.' A man from among the Helpers[1198] entered. His shoes were hanging from his left hand and water was dripping from his beard and mustache because he had purified himself. The next day, (the Messenger) said the same thing and the man appeared again. This happened three times. 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As (R) wanted to know about his actions. He approached him and said: 'I have fought with my mother and father and I would like to stay with thee for three nights.' (The man) replied: 'So be it.' ('Abdullah) watched him during those three nights and saw no unusual behavior, except that he would wake up and remember God Most High. Then, he said to him: 'I have not fought with my father, but the Messenger (S) says such-and-such things about thee. I wanted to become acquainted with thine actions.' He said: 'It is what thou hast seen.' When I went away, he called to me. He said: 'There is one thing: I have never envied anyone for something he has gotten.' I exclaimed: 'So, thy degree is from that!'"

'Awn bin 'Abdullah (R) was giving advice to a king. He said: "Keep away from pride for it is the first sin committed against God. It was out of pride that Iblis refused to prostrate himself before Adam. Keep away from greed, for Adam was expelled from heaven because of his greed. Keep away from envy, for the first blood that was shed unjustly was done so out of envy, when the son of Adam slew his

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[1196] "partisan Arabs" (*'arab bi-ta'assub*): or "bigoted/superstitious/fanatical (Arabs)." Since a less-commented upon aspect of the Prophet's mission was the effort to replace Arab tribalism (and by extension, racism) with a universal brotherhood in Islam, as when he bound the emigrants from Makkah with the Helpers in Madinah across tribal lines and exalted the status of the African black Bilal, the translator has selected "partisan" from among the several possibilities that *bi-ta'assub* offers.

[1197] Anas: Anas Malik, see Note 358.

[1198] "Helpers" (*Anṣār*): the people of Madinah who gave shelter to the Prophet and the emigrants from Makkah and who joined them.

brother. And when there is talk of the Companions, or of the attributes of God Most High or stars are discussed, keep silent and hold thy tongue."

Bakr bin 'Abdullah[1199] (R) says: "There was a man (at the court of) a king. Every day he would stand up and say: 'Do good to the doer of good. The bad deeds of the doer of bad will suffice. Leave him to his own deeds.' That king valued him for those words. Someone envied (the adviser) and said to the king that (the adviser) had said that a bad smell came from the king's mouth. The king said: 'What is the proof of this?' He said: 'It is that thou summonest him to thyself and see that he puts his hand on his nose so as not to smell the odor.' Then (the envier) came and took (the adviser) to his house and gave him food in which there was garlic. Then the king summoned (the adviser). He put his hand over his mouth. (The king) supposed that (the envier) had spoken the truth. It was the custom of the king that no one other than himself would write important decrees. He wrote to one of his slaves: 'Cut off the head of the deliverer of this letter. Stuff his skin with straw and send it to me.' He wrote it, sealed it and gave it to (the adviser). When he went out, that envier saw him cheerful. He said: 'What is that?' (The other) said: 'The decree of the king.' (The envier) said: 'Let me have it." (The other) said: 'All right.' (The envier) took it from him and delivered it to that official.[1200] (The official) said: "In this there is a command that I kill thee and fill the skin of thy head with straw and send it to the king.' (The envier) cried: 'O God, God! He wrote this about someone else. Refer it to the king.' (The official) said: 'There is no referral in the king's order,' and he slew him. The next day the man stood before the king as usual and said what he usually said. The king was astonished. He said: 'What didst thou do with that letter?' (The man) replied: 'So-and-so asked me to give it to him.' The king said: 'He told me that thou said such-and-such (about me).' (The man) replied: 'I did not say that.' (The king) said: 'Then why didst thou cover thy mouth with thy hand?' He said: "That man had given me some food in which there was much garlic.' The king said: 'Go and speak those words as usual: 'Requite the doer of good for his goodness and let the actions of the doer of evil suffice for him.' And it sufficed for that man.'"

Ibn Sirin (R) says: "I have not envied anyone for the world, for if one is destined for Paradise, how much is the world itself against the comfort that will come to him? If he is destined for hell, then what benefit is there for him from these comforts when he will go to the fire?"

Someone asked Hasan Basri (R): "Does the believer envy?" He said: "Hast thou forgotten the sons of Jacob? A believer envies. If it is a sorrow that he keeps inside his breast and does not let it out by deed, it

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[1199] Bakr bin 'Abdullah: Bakr bin ʿAbdullāh al-Mazanī, see Note 1104.

[1200] It should be pointed out that court officials were often trusted slaves.

has no harm." Abu Darda (R) said: "There is neither happiness nor envy for whoever remembers death often."

Concerning the True Nature of Envy

Know that envy is that thou dislike it when someone gets some blessing and thou desirest the disappearance of that blessing. This is forbidden on the evidence of Traditions and on the evidence that this is repugnance for the decree of God Most High. It is an inner malice; for the desire for the loss of some blessing for another that will not be thine is nothing other than malice. However, if thou desirest that thou have something like that, but do not wish for its loss to another, and do not dislike (his having) it, then it is called emulation, and also called competition. In religious matters, this is praiseworthy and may be an obligation.

God Most High says: *For this, let (all) those strive who strive.* (Q. 83:26) And He said: *Race one with another for forgiveness from your Lord.* (Q. 57:21) That is, put yourselves ahead of one another.

The Messenger (S) said: "There is no envy save for two things: one is (for) the man whom God Most High has granted knowledge and wealth and who continually works with his wealth according to his knowledge. The other is (for) the person to whom knowledge has been given without wealth. He says: 'If I had been given it, I would have done the same.' The reward for both is equal. If the wealth is spent in sin and the other says: 'If it were I, I would have done the same.' The sin for both is the equal."

Consequently, this (type of) competition is also called envy, but there is no displeasure at the blessings of another. Displeasure is never lawful except for the blessings which the sinner and the oppressor come by that are the instruments of their corruption and tyranny. It is lawful that thou desire the loss of (their) blessings. For in reality, thou hast desired the elimination of the tyrant and corruption, not the elimination of the blessings. The sign of this is that when they repent, that displeasure does not linger.

Here there is a point: another person has been given a religious blessing and one desires the same for oneself. When it does not come, it may be that one will disapprove of that difference. So, the elimination of the difference through the loss of that blessing may lighten his heart more than the (other's) retention of the blessing. It is to be feared that one's nature will not necessarily be devoid of this, but when this (feeling) is repugnant, it will be as though, if the matter were in his own hands, he would not turn away that blessing from (the other). One will not be held answerable for this much in one's nature.

DISCLOSING THE REMEDY FOR ENVY

Know that envy is a great illness of the soul. Its remedy is a compound of theory and practice.

AS FOR THE THEORETICAL, it is that one know that envy is injurious to oneself—in this world and the next, while it is beneficial to the envied person—in this world and the next.

As for that which is detrimental to (the envier) in this world, it is that he is always in (a state of) sorrow, grief, and torment. For, every moment, (he is concerned) with the blessings that the other receives. He himself is in as much distress as he wishes his enemy to be in. He is in the same situation that he wishes for his own enemy, for there is no sorrow greater than the sorrow of envy. What kind of a fool is it he who keeps himself miserable because of his enemy, while (the enemy) is not harmed by his envy?

There is a time limit for that (envied) blessing in the decree of God Most High. It is neither before nor after, neither more nor less, for its cause is the Eternal Decree. Some interpret this as good fortune. Whatever it is called, all agree that there is no alteration of that (divine decree). It is for this that a prophet (A) when he was afflicted by domineering wife, used to complain to God Most High. A revelation came: "Flee from her until her time expires, for that length of time has been ordained in the eternal decree and cannot be changed." A prophet (A) was made helpless by calamities; he supplicated and wept much. A revelation came to him: "That day when I decreed the heavens and the earth, this was thy portion. What dost thou say? Should I reapportion it for thee?"

If a person wishes to obliterate (another's) blessing with his envy, the harm redounds upon himself, for his own blessings are also obliterated by this envy. Too, envy of the unbelievers obliterates the blessing of one's own faith, as God Most High says: *A party of the People of the Book long to make you go astray.* (Q. 3:69) Therefore, envy becomes the coin of the torment of the envier!

However, the damage in the next world is greater, for one's anger is at the decree of God Most High and one's rejection is of his portion, which He has appointed in the perfection of His wisdom. No one can fathom the mystery of that. What betrayal of God's Unity can be greater than this? And then, he has rejected the compassion and counsel of the Muslims because he desires misfortune for them. Iblis is his companion in this desire. What evil can be greater than this?

And as for the envied, he has a benefit in this world: it is that what could he wish from this world more than that his envier be always in torment. What torment is greater than envy? No tyrant more resembles the oppressed than does the envier. The envied, if he receives news of

thy death or that thou hast been liberated from the torment of that envy, is saddened, for he always wishes to be blessed by being envied while thou art in the misery of envy.

As for (the envied one's) religious benefit, it is that he is oppressed by thee because of thine envy. It may be that thou act inimically to him with words. That will be the cause of thy good deeds' being transferred to his register and his evil deeds' being placed upon thy shoulders. Therefore, (while) thou didst want his worldly blessings to depart from him, they did not; and his blessings in the next world have been increased while for thee, the torment of the world has become immediate and the foundation for the torment of the next world has been laid!

So, thou didst suppose that thou were thine own friend and his enemy; but when thou looked, [it was the opposite:].[1201] Thou wert his friend and thine own enemy! Thou keepest thyself in misery while gladdening Iblis who is thy greatest enemy! When Iblis looked at thee and saw that thou dost not have the blessings of knowledge, piety, rank, and property, he feared that if thou were satisfied with that (state of deprivation), the spiritual reward of the Hereafter would come into thy possession. He wanted the spiritual reward of the Hereafter also to be lost to thee, and it was. For, whoever loves the knowledgeable and the religious and is agreeable to their rank and retinue (while he has none) will be among them tomorrow.[1202] As the Messenger (S) says: "Whoever loves someone will be with (that person) tomorrow."

It is said that a man is either a savant, a student, or their admirer. The envier is deprived of the spiritual reward of all three of these (states). The similitude of the envier is that he is like a person who throws a stone to strike his enemy. It misses him and returns to hit him in the right eye and blind it. His anger increases. Again he throws, harder, and it returns to strike him in the other eye and blind it. He throws (a stone) another time and it returns to strike him on the head. He does this while his enemy is unharmed. His enemies see him and laugh at him. This is the condition of the envier: the object of Satan's derision. All of these are the evils of envy. So, if it leads to raising one's hand and unleashing one's tongue in enmity, slander, lying, and the repudiation of God, its iniquity itself is great. Therefore, whoever realizes that envy will be a fatal poison for himself—if he be intelligent—will let it depart.

AS FOR THE PRACTICAL REMEDY, is to strive to root out the causes of envy from one's inner being. For, the causes of envy are pride, vanity, hostility, the love of rank, and the like, as we have said concerning the

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[1201] From the AA text.

[1202] Tomorrow: that is, in the next life, in the Hereafter.

essence of anger. These roots must be extirpated through earnest striving. This is the purgative so that the envy itself may definitely not exist. But when it appears, it may be stilled by opposing everything that envy commands. When it commands: "Make some snide remark about him!" one praises him. When it commands: "Slight him!" one gives him aid so that he hears it and his heart is gladdened. When he is pleased, a beam of light (from him) falls upon one's heart in reflection. One's heart is gladdened and the hostility is ended. As God Most High has said: *Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then, lo! he, between whom and thee there was enmity, (will become) as though he were a bosom friend.* (Q. 41:34) Here Satan may say to thee that if thou be humble and praise him, it will be interpreted as thy weakness. Thou are the chooser: either obey the command of God Most High, or the command of Iblis!

Know that this is a great and potent medicine, but it is bitter. It cannot be endured, except through the strength of knowledge by which a person understands that his salvation in religion and the world lies in it, and his perdition in religion and the world lies in envy. No medicine is possible without tolerating bitterness and pain. Greed must be cut off with that. When a disease strikes, the body must be placed in discomfort in the hope of a cure. If not, the disease may lead to destruction, and that is certainly greater than the pain.

Excursus: [How the Bane of Envy Must Be Rooted Out of the Soul][1203]

Know that if thou strivest earnestly much, usually thou wilt find a difference between the soul of the person who has troubled thee and that of the person who loves thee. Comfort and obligation are not equal in thy mind; indeed, thou wilt naturally despise the comfort of the enemy. Thou art not required to change that nature, for it is not in thy power. However, thou art responsible for two things: one is that thou necessarily do not disclose this (feeling) by word or deed; and the other is that thou dislike this trait in thyself and reject it with thine intellect, and that thou be desirous of the elimination of that trait. When thou hast done this, thou hast escaped the sin of envy.

If thou dost not express it in any manner, but there is a repugnance inside thee that thou continue to find this trait in thyself, some are of the opinion that thou art not accountable for this. The correct view is that thou art accountable, for envy is forbidden and this is the work of the soul, not the work of the body. Whoever desires pain for a Muslim and sorrows at his happiness will certainly be punished, unless he despises this trait. In that case, he will escape the sin. However, a

[1203] From the AA text.

person escapes envy completely when God's Unity conquers him. For him, there is neither friend nor enemy. Instead, he sees all with the eye of servitude to God Most High. He sees affairs as all from the One. This state is rare, like the lightning that flashes and departs. Usually it does not remain constant.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE TREATMENT FOR THE LOVE OF THIS WORLD AND DISCLOSING THAT THE LOVE OF THE WORLD IS THE BEGINNING OF ALL SINS

Know that the world is the source of all evil and the love for it the root of all sin. What can be more inauspicious than that it be the enemy of God Most High and the enemy of the lovers of God and the enemy of the enemies of God? As for the enmity with God, it is that (the world) blocks the way of God Most High's servants so that they may not reach Him. As for (the world's) enmity with the lovers of God Most High, it is that it displays itself (alluringly) and it adorns itself attractively in their eyes so that they are continually drinking the bitter draught of abstaining from it and are always suffering. As for its enmity with the enemies of God Most High, it is that it draws them into love for itself with deceit and trickery. When they become its lovers, it distances itself from them and goes into the hands of their enemies, as a harlot passes from man to man, so that in this world one sometimes suffers the sorrow of possessing it and at other times the regret of separation from it. In the Hereafter, one will experience the anger of God Most High and His punishment. One will not leap out of this trap, except the person who truly understands its reality and its harm and who is wary of it, as one is wary of magicians. As the Messenger (S) said: "Abstain from the world, for it is more magical than Harut and Marut."

We have discussed the real truth about the world—what it is, its harm, and its deceptions—in the Third Topic of the Prolegomena at the beginning of this book. In that, we have cited many Traditions censuring it and about which there are many Quranic verses. The object of all of the books of the prophets and the sending of prophets is this: to call people away from the world to the Hereafter and to explain to them the harm of the world, its calamities, and its suffering so that they may beware of it.

Disclosing the Harm of the World and the Censuring of the World in the Traditions[1204]

Know that one day the Messenger (S) passed by a dead sheep and said: "Do ye see how despicable this carrion is so that a person does not look at it? By that God at Whose command is the life of Muhammad, the world to God Most High is more despicable than that. If it were worth a gnat's wing to Him, He would not have given the unbeliever a

[1204] Traditions: Ghazzali uses the word *akhbār* generally, to include both Traditions of the Prophet and the traditions of other prophets and saints as well. See Note 1209.

swallow of water." And he said: " The world is accursed. Everything that is in it is accursed, except that which is for God Most High." And he said: "Love of the world is the beginning of all sins." And he said: "Whoever loves the world causes loss to the Hereafter, and whoever loves the Hereafter causes loss to the world. So, one chooses that which will remain over that which will not remain."

Zayd bin Arqam[1205] (R) says: "I was in the company of Abu Bakr and water was brought to him mixed with sweet honey. When he brought it to his mouth, he stood up and wept copiously so that all were weeping. He became silent. Then he began to weep again, so much so that no one had the courage to ask him about it. When he wiped his eyes, he was asked: 'What happened, O Successor of the Messenger of God?' He answered: 'One day I was sitting with the Messenger (S). I saw that he was shooing something away from himself with his hand, but I could not see anything. I said: "O Messenger of God, what is it?" He said: "It is the world which always displays itself to me. I drove it away; it returned and said: 'Thou hast leaped out of my hand, but those who come after thee will not leap away.'" Now, I feared that it had taken me.'"

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High has not created anything more hostile to Himself than the world and, having created it, He has not looked at it." And he said: "The world is the home of the homeless and it is the property of those without property. The person who accumulates it is foolish. The person who hates (another) for its sake is unwise. The person who envies (another) because of it is without religious knowledge. The person who seeks it is without certainty." And he said: "Whoever rises in the morning and the greater part of his aspiration is for the world is not a man of God Most High. Four traits accompany him: grief that will never cease; labor from which he shall never be free; poverty, for he will never achieve wealth;[1206] and a hope that will never be fulfilled."

Abu Hurayrah (R) said: "One day the Messenger (S) said: 'Dost thou not desire that I display to thee the whole world?' And he took my hand and placed it on a dunghill in which there were the bones of humans, sheep, and beasts of burden, and filthy rags and human filth. He said: 'O Aba Hurayrah! These skulls were full of avarice and greed, as are your heads. Today they have become skinless bones and they will soon be dust. This filth has been the different kinds of food that they secured with tremendous effort and which they have (now) thrown here. Everyone flees them (now). These rags were their luxurious garments that are now blown about by the wind. These bones are of their steeds upon which they used to sit and travel about the world. This is the entire

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[1205] Zayd bin Arqam: a Companion of the Prophet. He died AH68/687-8CE.

[1206] That is, he will never achieve as much wealth as he desires.

world. Tell whoever wants to weep for the world to do so, for it is the place for that.' Then all who were present burst into tears."

And the Messenger (S) said: "As soon as the world was created it was suspended between the sky and the earth, for God Most High did not look at it. At the Resurrection, the world will say: 'O Lord God, give me to the least of Thy servants!' He will say: 'Silence, O worthless one! It did not please Me that that thou belong to anyone in that world. Should it please Me today?'" And he said: "Some will be coming on the Day of Resurrection with deeds in the amount of the mountains of Tihamah.[1207] All will be sent to hell." They asked: "O Messenger of God, will they include those who performed the obligatory prayers?" He replied. "They pray, they fast, they remain awake at night in supplication, but when something appears from the world, they pounce upon it."

One day, the Messenger (S) came out and said to the Companions: "Who amongst you does not wish to be blind or to be blinded by God Most High? Know that whoever takes delight in the world and has great hopes from it, God Most High is able to blind his soul. Whoever becomes an ascetic in the world and has small hopes, God Most High gives him knowledge without his learning it and shows him the way, without the intervention of a guide."

One day, the Messenger (S) came out. Abu 'Ubaydah Jarrah had sent some goods from Bahrain and the Helpers had heard about it. They crowded the early morning obligatory prayer. When they had returned the greetings (at the conclusion of the prayer), all rose before him. The Messenger (S) smiled: "Ye mean ye have heard about the arrival of the goods?" They answered: "Yes." He said: "Let it be good news for you, for things will be done that will please you. I do not fear poverty for you; I fear that (the riches of) the world will be poured upon you, as they were poured upon those who came before you. Then, ye shall compete with one another, as they did, and ye shall be destroyed, as they were." And he said: "Do not occupy your souls with remembrance of the world." He prohibited remembrance of the world, not to mention loving and seeking it.

Anas (R) says: "The Messenger (S) had a camel which was called 'Adba.[1208] It ran better than any of the other camels. One day a

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[1207] Tihāmah is a name for Makkah and the northern Hijaz, a region of mountains and plains, especially the plain which slopes down from the western slopes of the mountains of Hijaz to the Red Sea.

[1208] ᶜAḍbā: corrected from *Ghaḍbā* in both HK and AA. In a note, HK states that the name means a female camel with cut ears. The form of the name is certainly feminine, but the corresponding passage in the Arabic of *The Revival* records it as *ᶜAḍbā*. The entry *ᶜAḍbā'* in *Muhit* confirms HK's definition, referring to the slit ears (but not his reading of the name), and explicitly cites it as the name of the Prophet's camel. It also states that ears of the Prophet's camel were not slit. Rather, she was so named because of her noble lineage. The difference between *ᶜAḍbā* and *Ghaḍbā* is a single dot over the first letter.

desert Arab brought a camel and raced it (against 'Adba). The desert Arab's camel won and the Muslims were grieved. The Messenger (S) said: "The truth by God Most High is that nothing exalts itself in the world that is not humbled." And he said: "Therefore, the world turns to you and devours your religion, as fire devours kindling wood."

Jesus (A) said: "Do not take the world as a lord so that the world does not take you as slaves. Lay away treasure so that ye not fear and store it where it will not be lost, for the treasure of the world is not safe from blight, while the treasure ye store for God Most High is secure." And he said: "The world and the Hereafter are co-wives of each other so that when thou pleasest one the other is displeased." And he said: "O my disciples! I have thrown down the world into the dust before you. Do not take it up again; for one of the pollutions of the world is that there is no sin against God Most High except in it. One of its uncleannesses is that a person cannot reach the Hereafter except by renouncing it. Pass outside of the world and abandon it and engage not in its development. Know that the source of all error is the love of the world. There are many passions the fruit of which are many lengthy sorrows." And he (A) said: "Just as water and fire cannot exist in one place together, love for the world and love for the Hereafter cannot be joined in one soul." Jesus (A) was asked: "What would happen if thou madest a garment for thyself?" He replied: "The rags of others are sufficient for us."

One day, he was caught by rain, thunder, and lightning. He fled looking for a place (of shelter). He saw a tent and went there. He saw a woman there and fled away. He saw a cave and entered it. He saw a lion and fled from that place. He said: "O Lord God! There is a resting place for all that Thou hast created save for me!" A revelation came to him: "Thine abode is My mercy—that is, heaven—and in heaven I shall make a hundred bright-eyed ones thy mates. I have created all with the Hand of My gentleness. And thy wedding shall be four thousand years, every day of which will (last as long as a) lifetime in the world. I shall command a herald to cry: 'Where are ye, ascetics of the world? All come to the wedding of Jesus the ascetic!' And all will come."

Once, Jesus was passing through a city with his disciples. He saw that all of the people of that place were dead. He said: "O people! They have died in the anger of God Most High; if not they would have been buried." They said: "We desire to know for what reason they have died." That night, Jesus (A) ascended a height and cried: "O people of this city!" Someone answered: "*At thy service, O Spirit of God!*" (Jesus) said: "What is your story?" (The other) answered: "At night we were in good health, but in the morning we were in the lowest level of hell." (Jesus) asked: "Why?" He said: "Because we loved the world and obeyed sinners." (Jesus) asked: "In what manner did ye love the world?" He answered: "As an infant loves his mother. When it came to us, we would rejoice; when it went away, we would grieve." (Jesus) said: "Why

did the others not answer (me)?" He said: "Each of them has a fiery bit in his mouth." (Jesus) asked: "Then how was it that thou answered?" He replied: "I was among them, but I was not of them. When the punishment came, I too was seized among them. Now, I am at the edge of hell. I do not know whether I shall be saved or fall into hell." Jesus (A) said: "O disciples! Barley bread, coarse salt, garments of sackcloth, and sleeping on trash heaps are much better in comparison with the welfare of the world and the Hereafter." And he said: "Make do with a little of the world in exchange for the health and safety of religion as others have made do with a little religion in exchange for worldly health and safety." And he said: "O ye people who seek the world for its rewards, if ye refrain from the world, the reward will be much greater!"

One day, Solomon the son of David was traveling with a great retinue. The birds of the air, fairies, and demons were attending him. They passed by one of the devout worshippers of the Children of Israel. He said: "O son of David, God Most High has bestowed upon thee a great kingdom." (Solomon) replied: "One glorification on the scroll of a believer is better than all that has been given to the son of David, for the glorification shall endure, but the kingdom shall not endure."

It is related in the Traditions: "When Adam (A) was eating wheat, he felt the need to move his bowels. He looked for a place in Paradise for this purpose. God Most High sent an angel to him who said: "What art thou seeking?" (Adam) replied: "I want a place to lay down that which is in my belly." This burden was not inherent in any of the foods of heaven except in wheat. (The angel) said: "Tell me where thou wouldst put it down! On the Throne, or on the Pedestal, or in a rivers of Paradise, or under the trees? Go to the world, for that is the place for such filth!"

It is related in the Traditions: "Gabriel said to Noah: 'How hast thou found the world during thy long life?' (Noah) answered: 'It is like a house with two doors. I enter through one door and leave through the other.'"

Jesus (A) was asked: "Teach us something so that God Most High will love us for that." He said: "Hold the world to be an enemy so that God Most High will love you."

As for the Non-Prophetic Traditions,[1209] Ali bin Abi Talib, may God ennoble his visage, says: "Everyone who has done six things has not

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[1209] *Āthār*: A classification of Traditions with respect to the relaters. "Among the relaters of traditions of the Prophet (*muḥaddithān*) the term *athar* (pl. *āthār*) applies to both the *exalted* tradition (*ḥadīth-i marfūʿ*)—a tradition, the chain of narrators of which goes back to one of the Companions—and the *intersected* tradition (*ḥadīth-i maqtūʿ*)—a tradition which goes back to one of the Followers (the generation following the Companions) or inferior to one of the Followers." (Note: HK; See also Hughes:

omitted anything in the search for Paradise and the flight from hell: [first], whoever has recognized God Most High and has obeyed Him; [second], (whoever) has recognized Satan and has opposed him; [third], (whoever) has recognized the right and put his hand to that; [fourth], (whoever) has recognized wrong and restrained his hand from that; [fifth], (whoever) has recognized the world and discarded it; and [sixth], (whoever) has recognized the Hereafter and been steadfast in the search for it."

A sage says: "What has been given to thee of the world has been in the possession of someone before thee and will belong to someone else after thee—and thou givest thy heart to that? Thy portion of the world is nothing more than a breakfast and a dinner; do not destroy thyself for that amount. Fast from world completely so as to obtain the Hereafter, for the stock-in-trade of the world is lust and its profit is the lowest level of hell!"

Some one said to Abu Hazim (R): "I love the world. What shall I do so that this love for the world may depart from my soul?" He answered: "Take from the lawful whatever thou obtainest from the world and put it (back) in its own place so that thy love for it not cause thee loss." (Abu Hazim) said that with the truth of that which he knew, for if one did that, the world would itself become irksome and change in one's heart into something unpleasant.

Yahya bin Mu'adh (R) says: "The world is the shop of Satan. Steal nothing from his shop and do not take anything, for then he will certainly attach himself to thee." Fudayl says: "If the world were of gold and transitory and the Hereafter of clay and eternal, it be incumbent upon the intelligent to prefer the lasting clay over the transitory gold. So, how will it be that anyone would choose the transitory clay [of the world] over the everlasting gold [of the Hereafter]?"[1210] And Abu Hazim (R) says: "Be wary of the world, for I have heard that whoever gives importance to the world will be brought in at the Resurrection and a herald will cry over him: 'He is that one who gave importance to that thing which God Most High despised.'" Ibn Mas'ud says: "Whoever is in the world is a guest and all that he has is borrowed. There is no conclusion for the guest except departure and returning the borrowed goods."

Luqman said to his son: "Son! Sell the world for the Hereafter so that thou may profit from both of them. Do not sell the Hereafter for the

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Dictionary of Islam, *Tradition*.) Ghazzali also uses it to describe traditions not about prophets and messengers of God.

[1210] The "transitory clay" is an allusion to the world and the "eternal gold" an allusion to the hereafter.

world, for thou wilt lose both." Abu Imamah Bahili[1211] (R) says: "When the Messenger (S) was sent with the Message, the army of Iblis came to him: 'Such-and-such a messenger has been sent. Now what shall we do?' (Iblis) replied: 'Do they love the world?' They said: 'They do.' He said: 'Then, since they love the world, do not worry, even if they do not worship idols. For with the love of the world, I shall lead them so that whatever they accept, they will accept unjustly, and whatever they give, they will give unjustly, and whatever they keep, they will keep unjustly. Evil, all of it, is pursuant to these three acts."

Fudayl Iyad (R) says: "If all the world is given to me, lawful and without reckoning (in the Hereafter), I would disdain it, just as ye disdain carrion." Abu 'Ubaydah Jarrah (R) was the commander of Syria. When 'Umar arrived there, he went to his residence and saw nothing there but a sword, a shield, a copy of the Quran, and a camel saddle. ('Umar) said: "Why hast thou not acquired any household equipment?" ('Ubaydah) replied: "This is sufficient for that place we are going." He meant the grave. Hasan Basri (R) wrote a letter to 'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz, but he wrote no more than this: "Assume that the day has come on which the last person will die for whom death has been ordained."[1212] ('Umar) wrote back in reply: "Assume that a day has come on which the world itself has never existed and the Hereafter has always existed."

In the non-prophetic Traditions it is related: "How strange it is, when a person knows that death is certain, how he can laugh! How strange it is, when a person sees how unstable the world is for everyone, how he can give his heart to it! How strange it is, when a person knows that God has ordained (everything), how he can busy his soul with his sustenance!" Dawud Ta'i (R) said: "Every day a person is continually tossing repentance and acts of worship behind him. Tell the truth, is he doing forced labor, or will the benefit be for someone else?"

Abu Hazim (R) said: "There is nothing in the world with which thou rejoicest that beneath it is not something that causes thee sorrow. As for unalloyed joy, it has not been created." Hasan Basri used to say: "No one departs the world without three regrets seizing him by the throat at the moment of death: (regret) for that which he has accumulated and not enjoyed to satiety, (regret) for that for which he had had hopes that were unrealized, and (regret) for the provisions for the Hereafter that he did not lay up as he should have done."

[1211] Abū Imāmah Bāhilī: a Companion of the Prophet. He died in either AH81/700CE or AH86/705CE. In *Tarjamah-yi Risalah-yi Qushayriyah*, a Tradition of his is quoted on his authority that the Prophet said: "Whoever looks at a woman and averts his eyes at the first glance is credited by God Most High with an act of worship, and he finds the sweetness of that in his soul."

[1212] That is, the end of the world.

Muhammad bin al-Munkadir (R) says: "If a person spends his entire life fasting by day and offering formal prayers by night, and he fulfills the duties of the Greater Pilgrimage and military service (in defence of Islam), but on the Day of Resurrection, it is said to him: 'This is the one who held the world, which God Most High despised, great,' what will be his condition? Who amongst us is not like that? Indeed, we have many sins, but we are deficient in our religious obligations."

It has been said: "The world is desolate mansion, but more desolate than that is the soul of the person who is engaged in the quest for it. Heaven is an eternal mansion, and more eternal than that is the soul of the person who is engaged in the quest for it." Ibrahim Adham (R) said to someone: "Dost thou prefer a dirham in a dream or a dinar when awake?" He answered: "A dinar when awake." (Ibrahim) said: "Thou liest, for the world is a dream and the Hereafter is wakefulness and thou dost prefer that which is in the world."

Yahya Mu'adh (R) says: "Intelligent is that person who does three things: he abandons the world before the world abandons him; he makes ready his grave before he goes to his grave; and he pleases God Most High before he reaches His Bosom." And he said: "The misfortune of the world is at that degree at which hopes for it distract one from God Most High. When it is obtained, what has one gained?" Bakr bin 'Abdullah[1213] (R) says: "Whoever makes himself self-sufficient of the world from the world is like the person who desires to extinguish a fire and throws dry wood on it."

'Ali [bin Abi Talib (R) said: "The world is six things: that which is eaten, that which is drunk, that which is worn, that which is smelled, that which is sat upon, and that which is sought in marriage. The noblest[1214] of that which is eaten is honey, and that is the spittle of an insect. The noblest of that which is drunk is water, and all the world and its inhabitants are equal in that. The noblest of that which is worn is silk, and that is spun by a worm. The noblest of that which is smelled is musk, and that is the blood of a deer. The noblest of that which is sat upon is a horse, and all men kill while sitting upon it. And the greatest of carnal passions is that for women, and that is obtained by the meeting of one instrument of urination with another instrument of urination. A woman adorns the most beautiful parts of herself, while you seek the ugliness part of her."

'Umar bin 'Abdullah (R) said: "O people! Ye have been created for a task in which, if ye do not have faith, ye are unbelievers. If ye believe in it, but are slack, ye are fools. For, ye have been created to be eternal, but will be taken from residence to residence."

[1213] Bakr bin 'Abdullah: Bakr bin 'Abdullah al-Mazani, see Note 1104.

[1214] "noblest" (*sharīf-tarīn*): AA has "sweetest" (*shīrīn-tarīn*).

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF THE BASENESS OF THE WORLD

Know that we have discussed this subject in the Topic *The Spiritual Knowledge of This World.*[1215] In this place this much must be learned, that the Messenger (S) has said: "The world is accursed by all that is in it, except that part of it which is accordance with God Most High. Consequently, one must know that which is for God Most High, as it is not accursed. That which is outside of this is accursed and the love for it is the beginning of all sins. Therefore, know that

ALL THAT THERE IS IN THE WORLD IS OF THREE KINDS:

THE FIRST (KIND) is that the exterior and interior of that which is of the world and cannot be for the sake of God. That is, all are sins, for the intention and objective is not for God Most High. Enjoying the permitted[1216] comforts of life is included, for they are merely for the world and are the seeds of hubris and heedlessness and the leaven of all sins.

THE SECOND KIND is that which is apparently for God, but it is possible that, by intention, it is part of the world. These are three: thought, remembrance (of God), and opposition to the carnal appetite. These three, if they are the sake of the Hereafter and the love of God Most high, even though they concern the world, are for God Most High. If the motive for thought is seeking knowledge in order to obtain acceptance and rank, if the motive for the remembrance is that people will consider him pious, and if the motive for self-restraint from the world is that he be considered an ascetic, they are worldly, censurable, and accursed, even though in appearance they appear to be for the sake of God.

THE THIRD KIND is that it appears to be for one's self-pleasure, but it may become possible that the aim and intention be for God and not for the world, such as eating food when the object is strength for worship, or marrying when the object is producing children, or going after some small wealth in order to have the leisure to worship and to be self-sufficient from others.

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever seeks the world for swagger and self-glorification will see God wrathful against him. But, if he seeks it in order to be independent of others, he will come on the Day of Resurrection with a face shining like the full moon." Therefore, the world is that in which there is the immediate pleasure of the self for which there is no need in the Hereafter. Everything that one needs for the Hereafter, since it is for the Hereafter, is not of the world, just as the

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[1215] The Third Topic of the Prolegomena. This refers to the material in the second chapter entitled: *The True Nature, Bane, and Purpose of the World.*

[1216] "permitted" (*mubāḥāt*): neither rewarded nor punished in Islamic law.

fodder for the beasts of burden on the road for the Pilgrimage is a part of the provisions of Pilgrimage.

God Most High has called whatever is worldly "desire": *(But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord) and forbade his desire; lo! the Garden will be his refuge.* (Q. 79:40-41) In another place, He has collected five things together and has said: *(Know that) the life of this world is play, sport, adornment, self-glorification among you, and rivalry for wealth and children.* (Q. 57:20) He said that the world is all in five things: play, pleasure, carnal passions, self-adornment, and rivalry in property and offspring. These things are tied to these five, collected in one verse, when He said: *Beautified for mankind is the love of the pleasures that come from women and children and stored-up heaps of gold and silver and branded horses and cattle and tillage.* (Q. 3:14) He said that in the hearts of people the love for these seven has been embellished: women, children, gold and silver, horses, landed property, and cattle. *That is the comfort of the life of the world!* (Q. 3:14) This is the happiness of people in the world.

Therefore, know that whatever of all of this is for the Hereafter is also of the Hereafter, and enjoyment and an excess of sustenance is not for the Hereafter. Indeed, the world is (divided) into three degrees: the amount absolutely necessary for food, clothing, and shelter; beyond that, the amount for the satisfaction (of needs); and beyond that, the amount for adornment and an increase of luxury, for which there is no end. Whoever contents himself with the necessary is saved. Whoever has reached the level of luxury has fallen into a chasm that has not bottom. Whoever contents himself according to his satisfaction is not free of danger, for satisfaction has two aspects: one is that which is closer to necessity, and the other, which is closer to enjoyment. Between these two, there is a degree that can be ascertained through reflection and effort. It may be that an excess that is not required be considered a requirement (for satisfaction) and one may be in danger of being called to account (at the Resurrection). The saints and the resolute contented themselves with the amount absolutely necessary.

The imam and model to be followed in this was Uways Qarani (R) who so straitened the affairs of the world upon himself that people used to think he was mad. A year or two years would pass when they did not see his face. He would come out at the call to obligatory prayer and return after the evening obligatory prayer. His food was date stones that he picked up from the path. If he got hold of some bad dates to eat, he would give the stones in charity. If not, he would buy a few dates to break his fast. His clothing was a tattered cloak that he had picked out of the trash and washed. Children used to throw stones at him as though he were mad and he would say: "Throw small stones so that they do not break my leg and keep me from purification and obligatory prayer." It was for this that the Messenger (S) never saw him without praising him

much and he commended him to 'Umar Khattab (R). When 'Umar found the people of Iraq assembled, he ascended the pulpit and said: "O people, whoever is Iraqi, sit down!" All sat down, one remained. ('Umar) said: "Are you from the Qarani?" He answered: "Yes." ('Umar) asked: "Do you know Uways Qarani?" He said: "I know him. He is more humble than that thou shouldst speak of him. Among our people, there is no one more foolish, madder, poorer, or viler than he." When 'Umar heard this, he wept and said: "I am continually seeking him because I heard from the Messenger (S) say: 'People in the number of the Rabi'ah and Mudar are going to enter heaven because of his intercession.'" These two tribes were so numerous that their number was not known.

Then, Harim Hayyan[1217] said: "When I heard that from 'Umar, I went to Kufah and searched for (Uways) until I found him on the banks of the Euphrates River. He was performing the obligatory (lesser) purification and washing his clothes. I recognized him from the descriptions of him that had been made. I greeted him and he replied. He stared at me. I wanted to take his hand, but he did not give it to me. I said: '*May God have mercy upon thee, O Uways, and forgive thee.* How art thou?' I began to weep out of my love for him and the pity that I felt for the weakness of his condition. He wept too and said: '*May God grant thee life, O Harim bin Hayyan!* How art thou, my brother, and what road brought thee to me?' I said: 'How dost thou know my name and the name of my father, and how didst thou recognize me, whom thou hast never seen?' He said: '*The All-Knowing and All-Aware informed me.* He from Whom no knowledge or news is hidden informed me. My soul recognized thy soul. There is an awareness of the souls of the believers for one another. They are acquainted with each other, even if they have not seen one another.' I said: 'Relate a Tradition of the Messenger (S) to me that may be a reminder[1218] for me.' He said: 'May my body and my soul be the Messenger's sacrifice! I did not see him myself, but I have heard the Traditions about him from others. I do not want that the way of relating Traditions be opened to myself, and I do not want to be a relater of Traditions, an issuer of decisions, or a remembrancer, for I have my own task and I do not attend to that.' I said: 'Recite a verse of the Quran to me so that I may hear it from thee. Offer a supplication for me and advise me so that I may act by that, for I love thee very much for the sake of God Most High.'

"Then he took my hand on the banks of the Euphrates and said: '*I seek refuge with God from the accursed Satan*,' and he wept. Then he said: 'My God speaks thus—and it is His most truthful and correct utterance—He says: *I did not create the jinn and mankind save for that*

[1217] Harim Ḥayyān: Harim bin Hayyan, see Note 897.

[1218] "a reminder" (*yādgār*): something to remember one by; a souvenir.

they worship Me, (Q. 51:56) and He says: *I did not create the heavens and the earth and that which is between them in play. I did not create them save with truth, but most of them do not know.*' (Q. 44:38-39) And he recited until: *Lo! He is the Mighty, the Merciful.* (Q. 44:42)[1219] Then, he uttered a cry and I said: 'Has he fainted?' Then he said: 'O son of Hayyan, thy father Hayyan died and thy death is also near. Wilt thou go to heaven or hell? Thy father Adam died and thy mother Eve died. Noah died. Abraham, the Friend of God, died. Moses, the Word of God, died. David, the Regent of God, died. And Muhammad, the Beloved and Messenger of God, died, *may God bless them all!* Abu Bakr, his successor, died and 'Umar, my brother, died. O 'Umar, O 'Umar!' I said: '*May God have mercy upon you,* Umar is not dead.' He said: 'God Most High has informed me of his death.' After saying this, he said: 'I and thou are also among the dead.' Then, he blessed the Messenger (S) and uttered a light supplication.

"Then he said: 'My parting counsel is that thou settest the Book of God Most High and the way of the righteous before thee and do not forget to remember death for an hour. When thou returnest to thine own people, admonish them and do not withhold counsel from the people of God, do not withhold one step consistent with the Practice (of the Prophet) and the congregation of (his) nation, for in that event thou wilt become impious and with that thou wilt fall into hell.' Then he offered a few supplications and said: 'When thou hast gone, O Harim bin Hayyan, thou shalt not see me again, nor will I thee. Remember me in thy supplications for I too shall remember thee in mine. Thou goest from this side so that I may go from the other side.' I wanted to accompany him for a while, but he would not permit it and he brought me to tears. As it happened, I followed him with my eyes until he had entered one of the lanes of Kufah and I never heard any news of him again after that."

So, the way of life of those persons who have recognized the bane of the world was thus and that is the way of the prophets and the saints, and they are the lords of the sacred.[1220] If thou dost not achieve that degree, it cannot be less than that thou content yourself with the amount of need. Thou shouldst not take up the way of enjoyment even once, lest thou fall into danger. Let this much suffice about the judgment of the world; we have discussed the rest in the Prolegomena.

[1219] The Quranic text omitted is: *Surely the Day of Decision shall be their appointed time, all together, the day a friend shall not avail a friend in anything, nor can they be helped, save him on whom God hath mercy. Lo! He is the Mighty, the Merciful.* (Q. 44:40-42)

[1220] "the lords of the sacred" (*haram*): Thus the HK text. AA has "the lords of resolution (*hazm*). The difference is a single dot over the middle letter: *r* does not have a dot while *z* does.

CHAPTER SIX: THE TREATMENT OF MISERLINESS AND GREED IN THE ACCUMULATION OF POSSESSIONS

Know that the branches of the world are many and one of its branches is wealth and enjoyment and another is rank and retinue, and it has other branches as well. However, the trial of wealth[1221] is immense. A greater trial is that which God Most High call has called "the Ascent"[1222] when He said: *But he hath not completed the Ascent—Ah, what will convey unto thee what the Ascent is?—(It is) to free a slave and to feed in the day of hunger.* (Q. 90:11-14) There is no greater Ascent than this (wealth) and there is no avoiding it, for though it is the cause of the easing of appetite, it is also provision for the Hereafter. One cannot do without food, clothing, and shelter; and these are the property which may be obtained with wealth. Consequently, there is no enduring not obtaining it and there is no safety in obtaining it. If it is absent, there is poverty from which there arises the fear of unbelief. If it is present, there is wealth from which there is the fear of hubris.

There are two states of poverty: one is covetousness and the other is contentment—and the latter is praiseworthy. There are two states for the covetous: one is greed with respect to people and the other is to earn with one's own hand—and the latter is praiseworthy. There are two states for the wealthy: one is miserliness and retention, the other is giving and generosity. There are two states for the giver: one is extravagance and the other is economy. Of these two states, one is censured and the other mixed. Learning all of these is important. In summary, wealth is not devoid of benefits, nor of detriments. It is a religious obligation to know both in order to guard against the detriments (of wealth) and (yet) to pursue a sufficient amount of it.

Disclosing the Repugnance of the Love for Wealth

God Most High says: *O ye who believe! Let not your wealth nor your children distract you from the remembrance of God. Those who are thus, indeed, they are the losers.* (Q. 63:9) Whoever neglects the remembrance of God, *may He be honored and glorified*, for his wealth and children is amongst the lost and the losers.

The Messenger (S) said: "The love of wealth and rank causes hypocrisy to grow in the soul as water causes leeks to grow." And he (S)

[1221] "wealth" (*māl*): *māl* refers to money, property, and virtually all other kinds of tangible wealth.

[1222] The Ascent (*al-ʿAqabah*): The Arabic word indicates a steep and difficult track or incline; a mountain pass; an obstacle or difficulty.

said: "Two hungry wolves do not cause the destruction in a flock of sheep as much as the love for rank and wealth does in the Muslim man." He was asked: "O Messenger of God, who are the worst of peoples?" He replied: "The rich." And he said: "A people will appear after me who will eat varieties of delicious foods and will possess multi-colored clothes and beautiful wives and precious horses. Their bellies will not be satisfied with small amounts of food, nor will they be content with a lot. All of their ambition will be for this world and they will hold the world as their god. Whatever they do will be for the world. It is my determination, I who am Muhammad, that whoever finds them from among the children of your children must not greet them with "peace." He should not visit their sick, he should not follow their biers, nor should he respect their leaders. Whoever does these things is assisting them in the destruction of Islam."

And the Messenger (S) said: "Leave the world to the worldly. Whoever takes anything from it in excess of his need—it is his own perdition that he takes without knowing it." And he said: "A person continually says: '*My* wealth and *my* wealth.' Nothing is thine of thy property except that which thou eatest and voidest, or wearest and wearest out, or givest charitably and layest up for eternity." Someone asked the Messenger (S): "What is the reason that I have no provision for death?" (The Messenger) said: "Dost thou have possessions?" (The man) replied: "I do." (The Messenger) said: "Send them on ahead of thee." That is, give them in charity, for the people's souls are joined to their possessions. "If one leaves his possessions in their place, they remain (in the world) and if one sends them on before (by giving them away in charity), they will go (to the next world)." And he said: "A person has three kinds of friends: one is he who is faithful unto death, another is (with him) to the graveside, and another is his friend unto the Resurrection. That which is faithful unto death is wealth, those which goes with him to the graveside are family and kinfolk, and those which are with him at the Resurrection are his deeds." And he said: "When a person dies, people ask: 'What did he leave behind?' The angels ask: 'What did he send before?'" And he said: "Do not built estates, for then ye will hold the world as a friend."

The disciples asked Jesus: "What is the reason that thou canst walk upon water and we cannot?" He replied: "How do ye value gold and silver in your hearts?' They said: "They are good." (Jesus) said: "They are the same as earth to me."

NON-PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: Someone was troubling Abu Darda. (Abu Darda) said: "O Lord God, lavish a sound body, a long life, and much wealth upon him!" This was the worse supplication that he knew, for whomever these were given would certainly ignore the Hereafter out of heedlessness and vanity and he would be destroyed. 'Ali (R) placed a dirham on the palm of his hand and said (to it): "Thou art

that which, if thou dost not leave my hand, has no profit for me." Hasan Basri (R) says: "By God, God Most High has not despised or held in contempt the person who does not esteem gold and silver."

In the Non-Prophetic Traditions, it is related that when dirhams and dinars were first struck, they were taken to Iblis. He took them and rubbed his eyes with them and kissed them repeatedly. He said: "Whoever loves thee will truly be my slave!" Yahya Mu'adh (R) says: "Dirhams and dinars are scorpions. Do not touch them if thou hast not learned the incantation for them. If thou hast not, their poison will destroy thee." He was asked: "What is their incantation?" He said: "It is that (thy) income be lawful and (thy) expenditures be just."

Maslamah bin 'Abd al-Malik[1223] went to 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz at the time of ('Umar's) death. He said: "O Commander of the Believers, thou hast done what no one has done. Thou hast thirteen children and hast not left them any dirhams or dinars." ('Umar) said: "Help me to sit up." (Maslamah) did so, and ('Umar) said: "I have not given any of their property to another and I have not given the property of others to them. My children are either worthy and obedient or unworthy. Those who are worthy and obedient to God, God will suffice for them (for) *He protects the righteous.* (Q. 7:196) As for those who are unworthy, I do not fear for whatever becomes of them."

Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurazi[1224] (R) acquired a lot of wealth. It was said: "Leave it for thy children." He said: "No, I shall lay this up with God Most High for myself and I will leave God Most High for my children so that He will keep them well." Yahya bin Mu'adh said: "There are two hardships for the rich at the time of death which others will not have: that their wealth is taken away from them, and that they will seized and questioned (about it)." [*And we seek refuge with God from that.*]

EXCURSUS: [THE WAY FOR WEALTH'S BEING PRAISEWORTHY]

Know that however much wealth is criticized for some reasons, it also has a praiseworthy aspect: for, in it there are both evil and good. It is for this that God Most High called it a blessing in the Quran, saying: *If he leave wealth, that he bequeath unto parents and near relatives in kindness; (this is) a duty for the god-fearing.* (Q. 2:180) The Messenger (S) said: "Honorable wealth is a good thing for an honorable man."

[1223] Maslamah bin ʿAbd al-Malik: 'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz's (Note 784) cousin. He fought against the Byzantines during the short reign of his brother, Sulayman (bin) 'Abd al-Malik (see Note 814). Another of his brothers who became caliph, Yazid II (rgd. AH101-105/720-724CE), appointed him governor of "the Two Iraqs" (modern Iraq and western Iran: *al-ʿIrāqayn*), and also Armenia. He died in Syria AH120/737CE.

[1224] Muḥammad bin Kaʿb al-Qarazī: an authority on Traditions, he died AH117/735CE.

And the Messenger (S) said: "It is to be feared that poverty will lead to unbelief." The reason for that is that when a person is helpless and in need of a loaf of bread, he looks about and is anguish. He sees his children and family suffering while there are many comforts in the world. Satan says to him: "What kind of justice is this? What kind of equity is this that thou seest from God Most High? What an unfair division He has made, giving so much to the sinners and oppressors who do not know what they have and what they do, while the wretched are perishing from hunger and are not given a dirham! If He does not know thy need, there is a deficiency in His knowledge. If He knows and does nothing, there is a deficiency in His power. If He knows and is able and does not give, then there is a deficiency in His mercy. If the reason He does not give anything is to give a spiritual reward in the Hereafter, He could give a spiritual reward without sorrow and hunger. Why does He not give it? If He cannot give it, His power is not absolute. With all of this, it is difficult to believe that He is Merciful, Magnanimous, and Generous when He keeps the whole world in suffering while His treasuries are filled with blessings which He does not give."

So Satan finds the way of temptation and proposes the problem of predestination, the mystery of which is hidden from everyone, so that (the person's) anger may overwhelm him and he begin to abuse destiny and fortune and say: "Destiny has become weak and fortune overturned. Blessings are all given to the undeserving and the ignoble." If it is said to him: "This destiny and fortune is subject to God Most High" and if he says: "That is not so," he becomes an unbeliever. If he says: "That is so," then he may attribute persecution to God. That, too, is unbelief. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "*Do not curse destiny, for God, He is destiny.*" Do not curse destiny, for destiny is God Most High. That is: that which ye know as the place of the transaction of affairs, that which you called destiny, *that* is God Most High!

Consequently, the odor of unbelief comes from poverty, except with respect to a person whose faith is so overpowering that he is content with poverty from God Most High and who knows that his welfare lies in that he be poor. Since most do not have this character, it is preferred that one have adequate means. For this reason, from one point of view, wealth is praiseworthy.

Another aspect is that while the objective of every astute person is the happiness of the Hereafter, achieving that is not possible except with three kinds of blessings: one is in oneself, such as knowledge and good character; another is in the body and that is soundness and health; and one is external to the body and that is an adequate sustenance from the world. The meanest of those which are external to the body is wealth. And the meanest is gold and silver in which there is no (intrinsic) benefit. However, (gold and silver) are for bread and clothing, and bread and clothing are for the body, and the body is the porter of the (five) senses.

and the senses are the net of the intellect, and the purpose of the intellect is (to serve) as a lamp and a light for the soul so that it may discern the Divine Presence and obtain knowledge. The knowledge of God Most High is the seed of happiness. So, at the end of all is God Most High. He is the beginning and He is the end, and this path, all of it, is to Him. Whoever understands this takes from the world that amount of wealth he needs on his way in this enterprise; he regards the rest as a fatal poison. His wealth is the worthy wealth of the worthy man, and it is praiseworthy.

For this the Messenger (S) said: "O Lord, make the food of the people of Muhammad an amount adequate for sustenance." He knew that whatever is in excess of that sustenance would be destructive and whatever was less than enough would lead to unbelief, and this too is a cause of destruction.

Hence, anyone who understands this will never love wealth. Whoever is in search of something for another goal loves that goal, not that thing. So, whoever loves wealth for itself is inverted and reversed[1225] and has not learned its true nature. For this the Messenger (S) said: "*The slave of the dinar is wretched, the slave of the dirham is wretched.*" The heads of the slave of the dinar and the slave of the dirham are hung with shame; for they[1226] become the lords of whoever cares about such things. Abraham (A) said about this: "*Preserve me and my sons from worshipping idols.*" (Q. 14:35) He prayed that he and his sons would be preserved from idol-worship. It was said that the leaders sought gold and silver from the idol, for (gold and silver) are the idols to which most of mankind turn. What office of the messengers is greater than that they fear idol-worship? *Peace!*

Disclosing the Benefits and Detriments of Wealth by Explanation and Analysis

Know that wealth is like a serpent; in it there are both poison and medicine. So long as we do not separate the poison from the medicine, its mystery and its knowledge cannot be made manifest completely. So, let us examine (wealth's) benefits and detriments in detail, one by one.

As for the BENEFITS OF WEALTH, there are two categories: one is worldly, the other religious. The first category is worldly: There is no need to discuss these for everyone recognizes them.

The second category is religious; these are of three kinds:

[1225] "inverted and reversed": he has things backwards.

[1226] "they": the dinar and the dirham.

THE FIRST KIND is that which thou spendest upon thyself for worship or for the provisions of worship. As for acts of worship such as the Greater Pilgrimage and warfare in defense of the faith, spending money on oneself is subsumed in the act of worship itself. As for that which is for the provisions for the act of worship, such as bread, clothing, and the sustenance—from them, the strength for all acts of worship and the freedom for all acts of worship are obtained. Everything without which worship cannot be achieved is itself of the essence of worship. Whoever does not have that in a sufficient amount is engaged every day body and soul in the search for the sustenance and is deprived of worship, the core of which is remembrance and meditation. Therefore, when there is (wealth) in an amount sufficient for worship, it is of the essence of worship and of the religious benefits. It is not considered worldly. This revolves about the intention and the deliberation of the soul as to what the direction of prayer of the soul will be. If the direction of prayer of the soul is toward tranquillity and sowing the way of the Hereafter, a sufficient amount is both the provision for the way and is also of the way.

Shaykh Abu al-Qasim Gurgani[1227] (R) had a lawful property from which he obtained an amount that sufficed for him. One day, the (harvest) grain of the property was brought (to him). I heard from Khwajah Abu 'Ali Farmudhi:[1228] "The shaykh took a handful of the grain and said: 'I would not exchange this for the trust of all[1229] the trusting.' Truly, this person recognizes that he engages in taking care of his soul when he knows what help freedom from care and sufficiency of sustenance gives to the traveling of the way."

THE SECOND KIND is that which one gives to people, and that is of four types:

THE FIRST TYPE is voluntary charity. Its spiritual merit, the blessing of the supplications of the poor, their resolve, and their happiness are great in religion and the world. A person who does not have wealth is unable to do this.

THE SECOND TYPE is generosity: that one be hospitable and do good to the brethren even if they be rich, give presents and offer consolation, attend to the people's rights, and perform ceremonies. All of these are laudable even if they be for affluent persons. The trait of generosity is acquired by means of (such acts). Generosity is the greatest of the traits of character, as it is praised.

[1227] Shaykh Abū al-Qāsim Gurgānī: See Note 915 on Khwajah Abu al-Qasim Gurgani. (Both *Khwājah* and *Shaykh* are titles of respect.)

[1228] Khwājah Abū 'Alī Fārmudhī: Shaykh Abu 'Ali Farmudi. (In older Khorasani dialect, *d* becomes *dh* in certain circumstances.) See Note 915.

[1229] "all": thus KH. AA has "most of."

THE THIRD TYPE is the preservation of one's reputation by its means, as when one gives something to a poet, middle-aged (married) women, or to persons who have some expectation from him. If he does not, they will abuse and slander him and revile him. The Messenger (S) has said: "Whatever with which one protects one's reputation from the tongues of backbiters is a voluntary charity, for the path of reviling and slander is closed to them and they are prevented from the harm of busying their hearts with that." If one does not do this, one may also become involved in retaliation, and such enmity is also long-lasting. And this (safeguarding) cannot be accomplished without wealth.

THE FOURTH TYPE is that which one gives to persons so that they serve him; for if every person does all tasks himself with his own hands, such as sweeping, washing, cooking, buying building, etc., all of his time would be consumed in (doing) them. An (untransferable) individual religious duty of each person is that which another cannot do for him, and that is remembrance (of God) and meditation. Spending time for whatever can be done by a representative is foolish, for life is short, the appointed hour is near, the journey to the Hereafter is a long one, and the provisions for (the Hereafter) are many. Every breath is a great treasure that must not be employed in any work that deviates from that. This cannot be arranged without wealth paid to employees to lift these tasks from one. However, doing one's tasks for oneself is a means of obtaining spiritual reward, but this is the work of a person whose degree is that at which his devotion is physical, not spiritual. As for a person who is a devotee of the affairs of the soul by way of knowledge and thought, another must do his tasks so that that service becomes the devotion of the servant[1230] and the means of (the devotee's) peace for more valuable works than those (physical) jobs (the servants) are doing.

THE THIRD KIND is that which is not given to a specific individual but benefits all, such as for bridges, inns, mosques, hospitals, endowments for the poor, etc. These are public charitable acts and they endure for a long time. One continues to receive their supplications and blessings after death. This, too, cannot be done except with wealth. These are the benefits of wealth in religion.

However, their benefits are not hidden in the world, and (the giver) is held dear and generous because of them. He is independent from people while the people are in need of him. Many friends and brothers may be gotten through that. He is beloved by the hearts of all and no one despises him, and the like.

[1230] That is, the servant shares in the spiritual reward of his employer whom he enables to perform more valuable works.

As for the DETRIMENTS OF WEALTH, some are worldly and some are religious. As for the religious detriments, they are of three kinds:

THE FIRST KIND is the facilitation of the way of sin and corruption for a person; for the carnal appetites inside a person themselves demand sin, but the inability (to fulfill those demands) is one of the causes of continence. When the ability appears, if one falls into sin, one will be ruined. However, if one restrains oneself, one falls into tribulation. Patience with ability is more difficult.

THE SECOND KIND is that if a man be strong in his religion and keep himself from sin, he cannot keep himself from the enjoyment of the permitted things, for who possessing wealth will, with the power of that wealth, eat barley bread and wear coarse clothing as did Solomon (A) in his own kingdom? When this person falls into affluence, his body rises against this. He cannot tolerate that (to which he had been accustomed) and the world becomes his Paradise. He hates death and cannot always find the means of luxury lawfully. He begins to take from the doubtful things. He cannot obtain them without the strength of monarchs, so he falls into fawning, dissimulation, hypocrisy, lying, and their[1231] service. When he has gained proximity to them, he is in danger of their aim and displeasure. When he becomes a confidant, he is envied and enemies appear who target him and cause him sorrow. He, too, rises in enmity in retaliation and competition. Mutual envy comes into being. These traits are the causes of all sin, for from this lying, slandering, and ill will towards people, all of the sins of the soul and the tongue originate. The meaning of this, that the love for the world is the source of all sins, is this: all of these (calamities) are its branches and limbs. It is not one detriment, nor ten, nor a hundred. Rather, (its detriments) are innumerable. Indeed, it is a bottomless pit, like the pit of hell that has been created for these people.

THE THIRD KIND—and this does not spring from a person *except him whom God has safeguarded*—is that, even if he does not sin or indulge in luxurious living, and he keeps away from doubtful things, and truly observes the way of humility so that he receives from the lawful and gives justly, the observance of these things occupies his heart, and this pre-occupation (itself) continually restrains him from the remembrance of God Most High and meditation about His Majesty and Greatness. For the secret and heart of all acts of worship is that one be conquered by the remembrance of God Most High so that intimacy with Him is complete and, by means of that, one may become unneedful of

[1231] "their": monarchs'.

everything other than He. This requires a free soul not pre-occupied with anything else. A rich person, if he has landed estates, spends most of his time thinking about development, the enmity of partners, paying taxes, calculations for the farmers, and their care. It he conducts a business, he is occupied with disputes with his partner and his inadequacies, the arrangements for journeys and the seeking of transactions in which there is greater profit. If he has flocks, it is the same. However, no property is more preoccupying than that of the person who, for example, has a buried treasure which he spends according to his need. He is always engaged with its protection and the fear than someone will take it from him, or that it be coveted. The valleys of the worries of the worldly have no end. Whoever desires to be in the world and free from worry is like the person who wishes to go into the water and not get wet.

These are the benefits and detriments of wealth. When the perspicacious examined them, they realized that a sufficient amount of it is an antidote; in excess, it is a poison. The Messenger (S) called his family and said briefly: "Whoever takes more than is sufficient for himself is destroyed, but he does not know it."

However, throwing everything away so that nothing remains and to occupy oneself with the needs of the soul is repugnant in the Law. As the Messenger said, this verse is in the Quran: *And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck, nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.* (Q. 17:29)

Disclosing the Harm of Covetousness and Greed and the Benefit of Contentment

Know that covetousness is a blameworthy trait. Aside from its degradation, which is immediate, and the shame, which will be at the end of the affair if not satisfied, it will generate many bad traits. Whoever desires something from a person will flatter and dissimulate, and his acts of worship (of God) will become hypocrisy. He will endure being held in light esteem and will assist (the person from whom he has some expectation) in the false. The human has been created greedy so that he is never satisfied with what he has; one cannot escape greed and covetousness except with contentment.

The Messenger (S) says: "If a person has two valleys filled with gold, he will desire a third valley; a person's insides cannot be filled except with earth. Whoever turns (to Him), God Most High will cause his repentance." And he (S) said: "All things of a human being become full except two: the hope for living and the love of wealth." And he said: "Blessed is that person who has been shown the way of Islam and has been given a sufficient amount for his sustenance, and is content with that." And he said: "The Holy Spirit breathed into my soul: 'No servant

will die who has not been given the full allotment of his sustenance.' Fear God Most High and seek your sustenance slowly and in goodness." That is, ye should not overreach and be overly ambitious. And he said: "Beware of the doubtful so as to be the most worshipful of mankind. Be content with that which ye possess so that ye may be the most grateful of mankind. And approve for others that which ye approve of for yourselves so that ye may be believers."

'Awf bin Malik al-Ashja'i[1232] (R) says: "We were with the Messenger (S), seven or eight persons. He said: 'Will ye not pledge loyalty to the Messenger of God Most High?' We said: 'No, we have pledged our loyalty once.' He said again: 'Will ye not pledge loyalty to the Messenger of God Most High?' We showed our hands and said: 'What should we pledge upon?' He said: 'That ye worship God Most High and perform the five obligatory formal prayers and that ye will go forward obediently in whatever He commands.' Then, he spoke softly: 'And ask nothing of anyone.'" ('Awf) said: "And these people were as though a riding crop had fallen from their hands and no one would say: 'Give it back to me.'"

Moses (A) said: "O Lord, who is richer among Thy servants?" He replied: "That person who is content with what I give him." And he asked: "Who is more just?" He replied: "That person who gives justice from himself."

Muhammad Wasi' (R) used to dip bread into water and eat it and would say: "Whoever is satisfied with this has no need of all mankind." Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "Every day an angel cries: 'O son of Adam, a little that suffices for thee is better than a lot from which there is hubris and negligence.'" Sumayt bin 'Ajalan[1233] says: "Thy whole stomach is no more than a hand's breadth by a hand's breadth.[1234] Why must it carry thee off to hell?"

In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High says: "O son of Adam, if I give thee the world, thy portion will be nothing other than thy victuals. Since I shall not give more than thy victuals and I shall include the business of the accounting on others, what goodness is there greater than that which I have done for thee?"

A wise man says: "There is no person more tolerant of pain than the greedy coveter. There is no person whose life is more pleasant than that of him who is content. There is no one whose sorrow is more lasting

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[1232] ʿAwf bin Mālik al-Ashjaʿī: a Companion of the Prophet. In the *Sīrah*, he is quoted in a narrative about the expedition against Dhat al-Salasil. In it, he refers to himself as a skilled butcher.

[1233] Sumayt bin ʿAjalān: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1234] "hand's breadth" (*bi-dast*): The equivalent of a *wajab*, a span, with the fingers outspread about 9". Probably the width of the hand is meant here, about 5" by 5".

than the envier. There is no one more carefree than the person who has abandoned the world. There is no person whose regret is greater than the learned evil doer."

And Sha'bi (R) says: "Someone caught a sparrow. (The sparrow) said: 'What dost thou want with me?' He said: 'I shall kill thee and eat thee.' (The sparrow) said: 'Thou will not get anything by eating me. I can teach thee three things which are better than thine eating me. However, I shall tell thee one while in thy hand. I shall tell thee another when thou release me so that I can perch on a tree. Then I shall tell thee the third when I fly from the tree to the mountain.' He said: 'Speak!' (The sparrow) said: 'First, regret not anything which leaves thy possession.' He released the bird and it flew to a tree and perched there. Then he said: 'Tell me the second thing.' (The bird) said: 'Never believe absurd words.' And it flew away and perched on the mountain. Then it said: 'O wretch! If thou hadst killed me, there were two pearls in my stomach, each weighing twenty mithqals.[1235] Thou would have become rich!' That man bit his finger and said: 'Alas! What a pity! Now tell me the third thing." It said: 'Thou hast forgotten the first two. What wilt thou do with the third? I told thee not to regret the past. I told thee not to believe the absurd. My flesh and feathers together do not weigh two mithqals! How could there be two pearls inside me each weighing twenty mithqals?' Having said this, it took wing and flew off." This parable was related so that it be known that when covetousness appears, a person believes all (kinds of) absurdities.

Ibn Sammak (R) says: "Covetousness is a rope around thy neck and shackles on thy feet. Take off the rope so that thou may remove the shackles from thy feet and be saved."

Disclosing the Treatment of Greed and Covetousness

Know that its medicine is a compound of the bitterness of patience, the sweetness of knowledge, and the hardship of deed. All medicines for the sickness of the soul are mixed from these. The obtaining of this treatment is in five things:

THE FIRST is deed. And that is that one reduce one's own expenses and be satisfied with coarse clothing and dry bread. One eats stew occasionally, for that much is without coveting and without greed and may be easily obtained. However, if one lives luxuriously and spends a lot, one cannot be satisfied.

The Messenger (S) said: "*He is not impoverished who limits himself.*" Whoever spends according to rule will not become poor. And

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[1235] "twenty mithqals": about 1.75 ounces each, according to the value given in Steingass.

he said: "There are three things in which the people's salvation lies: fear of God most High in private and in public, spending according to rule in poverty and wealth, and giving justice (evenly) in anger and happiness."

Someone saw Abu Darda (R) picking up date stones and saying: "Observing moderation in livelihood is a part of the religious knowledge of a man."

And the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High will keep whoever spends according to rule free from want. He will keep whoever spends without reckoning poor. God Most High loves anyone who remembers Him." And he (S) said: "Planned spending and moderation are one half of livelihood."

THE SECOND TREATMENT is that when one has obtained ones needs for the day, one should not worry too much about the future, for Satan is always saying to him: "Life is long and tomorrow thou mayest not get anything. Exert thyself today and do not rest. Look for it wherever it may be." *Satan promises you poverty and enjoins upon you lewdness.* (Q. 2:268) He desires that, out of the fear of destitution tomorrow, he keep thee in toil for the present and in the form of the poor so that thou wilt be ridiculed; for it may be that tomorrow itself will not come. If it comes, the pain of that will not be greater than that into which thou hast cast thyself immediately today. The avoidance of this lies in knowing that sustenance does not appear because of greed, but sustenance is pre-ordained and will certainly come.

The Messenger (S) passed by Ibn Mas'ud and saw that he was very sad. He said: "Do not burden thy soul with much sorrow, for whatever has been destined shall be. Whatever thy sustenance is will certainly come to thee. Thou must know that the sustenance of a servant (of God) is more often from a place where thou dost not expect it." God Most High says: *And whoever keeps his duty to God, God will appoint a way out for him; and will provide for him from a quarter whence he has no expectation.* (Q. 65:2-3) The sustenance for whoever is virtuous will come from a place where it was not expected.

Sufyan Thawri (R) says: "All that is, is of two kinds: that which is my sustenance which comes to me without haste, and that which is the sustenance of others and will not come to me with the combined effort of the inhabitants of heaven and earth. So, what is the use of my being anxious about seeking (it)?"

THE THIRD TREATMENT is that one know that if he does not covet but is patient, he will be afflicted. However, if he covets and is not patient, he becomes both wretched and afflicted. He will be blamed and is in danger of punishment in the Hereafter, while he gets spiritual reward and is praised for (not coveting and being patient). Indeed,

affliction with spiritual reward and self-respect is preferable to affliction with censure, reproach, and the fear of punishment (in the Hereafter).

The Messenger (S) said: "The honor of a believer lies in that he be independent of people." 'Ali (R) says: "Thou art the prisoner of him from whom thou hast a need. Thou are the commander of whoever is in need of thee. Thou art the peer and equal of him from whom thou hast no need."

THE FOURTH TREATMENT is that one reflect upon why he has this greed and covetousness. If he has it for the comfort of the belly, an ass and a cow eat more than he does. If he has it out of sexual appetite, the swine and bear are ahead of him in that. If he has it for ostentation and fine apparel, he will see many Jews and Christians exceeding him in that aspect. If he abandons covetousness and is content with a little, he will find no equal for himself except the prophets, the saints, and the truly righteous. Moreover, it would be better if he were like those rather than like the others.

THE FIFTH TREATMENT is that one reconsider the harm of property when it becomes great. In this world, it is in danger of vermin, and in the Hereafter he will enter heaven five hundred years after the poor. One must always look at a person who is beneath him in the world so that he will continually express gratitude, and not look at the state of the rich, lest God's blessings appear contemptible to him. The Messenger (S) says: "Look at the person who is below you in the world."

Iblis is always saying to thee: "Why art thou content when so-and-so and so-and-so have so much wealth?" When thou abstainest from the world, he says: "Why dost thou exercise caution when so-and-so and so-and-so devour the unlawful?" And he continually reminds thee of those who have more than thou hast in the world and who are less than thou art in religion. But spiritual happiness is the opposite of this: thou must always look at the great in religion so as to see thyself remiss. Thou shouldst look at the poor in the world so as to see oneself rich.

DISCLOSING THE VIRTUE AND SPIRITUAL REWARD OF GENEROSITY

Know that the state of anyone who does not have wealth must be contentment, not avarice. If one is wealthy, his state must be generosity, not stinginess. The Messenger (S) said: "Generosity is a tree in heaven. Whoever is generous has touched one of its branches. It carries him to heaven. Stinginess is a tree in hell. Whoever is stingy has touched one of its branches. It carries him to hell." And he said: "There are two traits to which God Most High is hostile: miserliness and a bad disposition." And he said: "God Most High has not created any saint except that he be

generous and of a good disposition." And he said: "The sin of the generous is overlooked, for whenever he stumbles (into error), God Most High is his Helper." The Messenger (S) captured some people in a war against the unbelievers. All were executed save one. 'Ali (R) said: "All have the same religion, the same sin, and the same god, why didst thou not execute him?" The Messenger (S) said: "Gabriel came and informed that I should not execute him because he was generous."

And he said: "The food of the open-handed is medicine for the heart; the food of the miser is a disease." And he said: "A generous person is close to God Most High, near to Paradise, near to the people, and far from hell. The miser is far from God Most High, far from Paradise, far from the people, and near to hell. God loves the generous ignoramus more than the pious miser. The worst of afflictions is miserliness." And he said: "The saints of my people in heaven have reached that place not through formal prayer and fasting, but through generosity, a soul free of deceit, and through counsel and compassion for the people." It is related in the Traditions: "God Most High revealed to Moses (A): 'Do not kill Samiri,[1236] for he is generous.'"

NON-PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: 'Ali (R) says: "When the world gives thee good fortune, spend so that it not diminish. When it turns away from thee, also spend, for it will not remain." Someone wrote a petition to Husayn bin 'Ali. He accepted it and said: "Thy request is just." He was asked: "Why didst thou not read it?" (Husayn) replied: "Then God Most High would have asked me about the shame of his standing before me."

Muhammad bin al-Munkadir (R) relates the story of Umm Dhurrah,[1237] the serving woman of ' (R). She said: "Once Ibn al-Zubayr[1238] sent two sacks of silver and 180,000 dirhams to 'Ayishah (R).

[1236] Sāmirī or al-Sāmirī, mentioned in the Quran (Q. 20:87-88) in connection with the story of Moses and the golden calf. He proposed the making of the calf. In the Biblical version (Ex. 32), the making of the calf is in response to a popular demand to which Aaron accedes. Some are of the opinion that the name *Sāmirī* should be translated 'Samaritan, although this would be anachronistic." Samiri and the Story of the Golden Calf are discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective*, and in the chapters on Moses extracted from that in a separate volume, *Moses*.

[1237] Umm Dhurrah: No other information about her from available standard sources at present.

[1238] Ibn al-Zubayr: ʿAbdullāh bin al-Zubayr, a Companion of the Prophet, was the first Muslim child born after the Migration (See Note 1134 about Asma') AH1/622CE. He was a courageous soldier and participated in may of the wars that followed upon the expansion of Islam after the death of the Prophet, fighting in North Africa and Persia. He sided with 'Ayishah against 'Ali and later rose against the rule of the Umayyads. Hajjaj (see Note 1161), was dispatched to put the rebellion down. After a siege of six months, his 97 year-old mother lived to see her son—then about 70—killed and his dead body crucified at Hajjaj's order (AH73/692CE).

She called for trays and distributed all of it to the poor and the deserving. That evening, she said to me: 'Bring me some food so that I may break my fast.' I brought her some bread and olive oil, as there was no meat. I said: 'Thou spent all of that money today! What would it matter if thou hadst bought some meat for us with one dirham?' She said: 'If thou hadst reminded me, I would have done so.'"

When Mu'awiyah (R) passed through Madinah, Husayn (R) said to Hasan (R): "Do not bid him farewell quickly." When Mu'awiyah left Madinah, (Hasan) said (to him): "We have a debt." He went after him and told him the story of his debt. One of Mu'awiyah's camels had been left behind the others. (Mu'awiyah) asked: "What is that camel carrying?" He was told: "It is gold, 80,000 dinars." (Mu'awiyah) said: "Give it to Hasan to be applied to the debt."

Abu al-Hasan Madayini[1239] (R) says: "Hasan, Husayn, and 'Abdullah Ja'far,[1240] may God be pleased with them all; all three were traveling on the Pilgrimage. On the way, they became hungry and the camel bearing their provisions had gone on ahead of them. So, they remained hungry and thirsty for a time. Then they came upon an old Arab woman. They said: 'Dost thou have anything to drink?' She replied that she had. She milked the sheep that she had and gave them the milk. They drank it, then asked: 'Dost thou have any food?' She said: 'No, except for this sheep. Slaughter it and eat it.' They slaughtered it and ate it. Then, they said: 'We are of the Quraysh. When we return from this journey, come to us so that we may do thee some kindness.' They went away. When the old woman's husband returned, he became angry and said: 'Thou gavest our sheep to some people and thou dost not know who there were!'

"Time passed. Because of their poverty, that old woman and her husband happened to come to Madinah. They collected camel dung and sold it. One day, the old woman was selling in a neighborhood. Hasan (R) was sitting at the door of a house and he recognized her. He said: 'Old woman! Dost thou know me?' She replied: 'No.' He said: 'I was thy guest when I came to thee on such-and-such a day.' The old woman said: 'Art thou he?' He said: 'Yes.' Then Hasan ordered that she be given a thousand sheep and a thousand dinars. Then he sent her with his own slave to Husayn (R). Husayn (R) asked: 'What did my brother give

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[1239] Abū al-Ḥasan Madāyinī: the surname indicates an association with Madā'in, the Arabic name for Ctesiphon, a Sassanid capital on the banks of the Tigris River near Baghdad.

[1240] 'Abdullah bin Ja'far: 'Abdullāh bin Ja'far, a Companion of the Prophet. He was born in Ethiopia of parents who had fled there at the Prophet's order during the period of intense Quraysh hostility at Makkah. Returning to Madinah with his father, he earned the epithet "the Sea of Generosity" because of his liberality. He fought on the side of 'Ali at the battle of Siffin. He died at Madinah AH80/708CE.

thee?' She said: 'A thousand dinars and a thousand sheep.' Husayn gave her the same things and sent her with the slave to 'Abdullah bin Ja'far (R). He asked: 'What did those two give thee?' She said: 'Two thousand sheep and two thousand dinars.' He gave her the same as that which the other two had given together and said: 'If thou hadst come to me first, I would have thrown them into difficulty! That is, I would have given so much that they would not have been able to match it!' And so she left and brought the four thousand dinars and four thousand dinars to her husband."

There was a man famous for his generosity among the Arabs. Some people were coming back from a journey and they were hungry. They had stopped at the entrance to a neighborhood and gone to sleep hungry. One of them had a camel. He saw a corpse in a dream and it said: "Wilt thou sell thy camel for a thoroughbred one?" It was said that the dead man had a good camel that he left behind. He said: "I would sell it," and he gave it to him. The corpse accepted the camel and killed it. When that man awoke from sleep, he found his own camel killed. A pot was set up and they cooked and ate it. When they left that place, a caravan appeared. One of the caravaneers called to the owner of the camel, using his name. When he drew near, he said: "Didst thou buy a thoroughbred camel from such-and-such a deceased person?" He answered: "I bought it, but I bought it in a dream." Then, he related the story. The other said: "This is the thoroughbred camel, take it! Last night I saw my father in a dream who said: 'If thou be my son, give this thoroughbred to such-and-such a person.'"

Abu Sa'id Khargushi[1241] relates: "There was a man in Egypt who used to help the poor and secure things for them. A baby was born to one of those who had nothing. He said: 'I went to him and he came and asked everyone (for help) on my behalf. There were no gifts. Then, he took me beside a grave, sat down, and said: "May God Most High have mercy upon thee! Thou hast always taken away the sorrow of the poor and given that which is necessary. I have made efforts on behalf of the child of this poor man, but there were no gifts." Then, he rose and took a dinar that he had and divided it, giving half to me. He said: "I am lending this to thee until something is found."' That man was called Muhtasib. (The father of the child) said: 'I accepted that half dinar and took care of the

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[1241] Abū Saʿīd Khargūshī: a contemporary of Shaykh Abū ʿAlī Daqqāq, also mentioned in *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'*. ('Attar) Shaykh Abu 'Ali al-Hasan bin Muhammad al-Daqqaq was a mystic and preacher at Nishapur and the teacher of Abu al-Qasim Qushayri, the author of *Risalah*. Shaykh 'Abu 'Ali died AH406/1015CE or AH412/1021CE, from which we may assume that Abu Sa'id was active during the late 4th and early 5th Hijri centuries (late 10th and early 11th centuries CE). Both Arabic editions of the *Revival* I have consulted have *Ḥargūshī* instead of *Khargūshī*, while both Persian editions in my possession have the form I have used. The difference, again, is a single dot.

child.' That night Muhtasib saw a corpse in a dream that said: 'I have heard all that thou hast said, but today we do not have permission concerning a reply. Now, go to my house and tell my children to dig where the fireplace is. There are five hundred golden dinars there. It should be given to that man whose child has just been born.'

"The next day Muhtasib went and did as he had been told. He found the five hundred dinars and said to (the dead man's) children: 'The dream was not about me. This gold is your property. Take it.' They said to him: 'Our deceased father is generous! Should we the living be miserly? Take all of it to that man as (our father) said.' Muhtasib picked up that money and brought it to the man. That man took one dinar, broke it in half, and gave it to Muhtasib in repayment of his loan. Then, (keeping the other half of the dinar) he said: 'Give the rest to the poor, for I have no need of more than this.'" Abu Sa'id Khargushi (R) says: "I do not know which of them was more generous." And he said: "When I reached Egypt, I sought the home of that man. His grandchildren had remained there and I saw them and the mien of goodness was manifest upon them. I remembered this verse: *And their father was righteous.*" (Q. 18:82)[1242]

Do not hold it strange that the blessing of generosity continues after death and is revealed through dreams, for the custom of Khalil[1243] (A) was to entertain guests and hospitality. After his death, the blessing remains on that mausoleum[1244] to the present day.[1245]

Rabi bin Sulayman[1246] (R) recounts that when Shafi'i (R) reached Makkah, he had one thousand dinars with him. He pitched a tent outside of Makkah and poured out that money on a cloth. He would hand a handful of the money to whoever greeted him with "Peace." Before the time of the midday obligation,[1247] nothing remained of the gold he had strewn upon the cloth. Once, someone seized (Shafi'i's) horse to sit upon. He said to Rabi': "Give him 4,000 dinars and apologize to him." One day, 'Ali (R) was weeping. He was asked: "Why art thou weeping?" He replied: "It has been seven days since any guest has come to my house."

Someone went to a friend and said: "I owe four hundred dirhams," and he gave it to him and wept. His wife said: "If thou wert

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[1242] The Quranic verse refers to the father of the two orphans in the story of encounter of Moses and Khidr. He had hidden a treasure for them under a wall which Khidr repaired as the time had not yet come for its discovery.

[1243] "Khalīl," an epithet of Abraham, meaning "the Friend (of God)."

[1244] "mausoleum": the Tomb of Abraham (*Mashhad-i Khalīl*) at Hebron in Palestine.

[1245] "present day": that is, the time of al-Ghazzali.

[1246] Rab' bin Sulayman: al-Rabīᶜ bin Sulaymān, Abū Muḥammad. An important disciple of al-Shafi'i (see Note 401), he was a well-known jurisprudent in Egypt. He died AH270/883-4CE.

[1247] "the midday obligation": the noon obligatory formal prayer.

going to cry about it, thou ought not have given it to him." He said: "I am weeping because I had been negligent about his condition so that when he fell in need for the money he had to ask me for it."

Disclosing the Blameworthiness of Miserliness

God Most High says: *...and whoever is saved from his own avarice; they are the successful!* (Q. 59:9) He who guards against the miserliness of his self achieves success. And the Most High and Holy also said: *And let not those think who are niggardly with that which God has given them of His bounty that it is better for them; nay, it is worse for them. That with which they were niggardly will hang about their necks on the Day of Resurrection.* (Q. 3:180) Do not suppose that it is better for those persons who are ever stingy with that which God Most High has given them! Rather, it is their undoing and it will be soon that whatever they withheld out of miserliness will become a collar thrown around their necks at the Resurrection.

The Messenger (S) said: "Keep your distance from miserliness, for those people who were before you were destroyed because of miserliness. Their miserliness was such that they shed blood unjustly and held the forbidden to be lawful." And he (S) said: "Three things are destroyers: stinginess when it is obeyed, that is, that thou act in obedience to it and not oppose it; the vain desires which thou pursuest; and the self-conceit of a man."

Abu Sa'id Khudri[1248] (R) says: "Two men went to the Messenger (S) and asked for the price of a camel from him. He gave it to them. When they left, they went to 'Umar and thanked him. 'Umar told the Messenger (S) about this. (The Messenger) said: 'Such-and-such a person received more than that and did not express his thanks.' Then he said: 'Whenever one of you comes importuning and takes something from me, it is a fire that he has in his hands.' 'Umar said: 'Since it is like fire, why dost thou give it to them?' He answered: 'Thou sayest that the miser is more excused[1249] than the oppressor is. What oppression is greater to God Most High than miserliness? God Most High with honor and greatness has sworn that He will not allow a miser into heaven.'"

One day, the Messenger was circumambulating (the Ka'bah). A person had his hand on the ring on the door of the House (of God), and was saying: "O Lord God! By the sanctity of this House forgive my sin." He (S) said: "Tell me what thy sin was." (The man) said: "My sin is

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[1248] Abū Sa'īd Khudrī: his father was Malik bin Sinan who, when the Prophet was wounded at Uhud, sucked the blood from his face. Abu Sa'id is a narrator of many Traditions.

[1249] "excused" (*ma'dhūr*), following AA's text. HK has *maghrūr* which can mean "self-deluded" or "haughty."

greater than that it could be described." (The Messenger) asked: "Is thy sin greater or the earth?" He answered: "My sin." (The Messenger) asked: "Is thy sin greater or the heavens?" He answered: "My sin." (The Messenger) said: "Is thy sin greater or the Pedestal (of the Throne of God)?" He said: "My sin." (The Messenger) asked: "Is thy sin greater or God Most High?" He answered: "God Most High." He (S) said: "So say what it is." He replied: "O Messenger of God, I have much wealth. When a beggar appears in the distance, I suppose that a fire has come to fall upon me." The Messenger (S) said: "Get away from me so that I do not burn in thy fire! By that God Who sent me in truth, if thou perform obligatory prayers for a thousand years between the Corner and the Station[1250] and weep until a stream flows out of thine eyes and trees grow, but thou die a miser, thy place will not be other than hell. The miserliness of the miser is unbelief and unbelief is in the fire! *Woe unto thee!* Hast thou not heard that God Most High says: *As for him who is niggardly, surely he is niggardly for his own soul.* (Q: 47:38) *...and whoever is saved from his own avarice; they are the successful!*" (Q. 59:9)

Ka'b used to say: "Every day two angels are appointed for each person. They cry: 'O Lord! If he hoards his wealth, waste it not on him; if he spends it, replace it.'" Abu Hanifah (R) says: "I do not set right (the miser, nor do I listen to his testimony, for miserliness will lead him to the limit of hair-splitting and he will seek more than is his right and take it."

John, the son of Zechariah, saw the devil. John asked: "Whom dost thou dislike more and whom dost thou love more?" He replied: "I love more the miserly ascetic, for he is always in agony while he worships. His miserliness nullifies (his worship). I dislike more the generous sinner, for he eats and lives well, and I fear that God Most High will have mercy upon him because of his generosity and forgive him."

Disclosing the Spiritual Reward of Munificence

Know that munificence is greater than generosity, for a generous person is one who gives of that which he himself does not need, whereas munificence is that—though one needs something—he spends it for the needs of others. Just as the perfection of generosity is that one give what he needs oneself, the perfection of miserliness is that one withhold from satisfying his own important needs so that if he become ill, he does not treat (himself).[1251] In his soul, there are expectations: he is always waiting to ask from others, but cannot buy with his own money.

[1250] "between the Corner and the Station": the open space between the western corner (*rukn*) of the Ka'bah in which the Black Stone is set and the Station of Abraham (*Maqām-i Ibrāhīm*).

[1251] That is, that one does not spend the necessary funds to achieve a cure.

The merit of munificence is tremendous. God Most High praised the Helpers in these (words): ... *and (the Helpers) preferred (the fugitives from Makkah) above themselves, even though poverty was their lot.* (Q. 59:9) The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High will forgive whoever gets something which he desires, but abandons his own desire and gives it (to another)." 'Ayishah (R) says: "We never ate our fill in the house of the Messenger three days in succession. We could have eaten it, but we gave it (on others)."

A guest arrived for the Messenger and there was nothing in his house. One of the Helpers came and took (the guest) to his own home. He had a little food. The lamp was extinguished on some pretext and the food was placed before the guest, while (the Helper's) family moved their hands back and forth from the food without taking or eating anything so that the guest might eat his fill. The next day, the Messenger (S) said to the Helper: "God, may He be honored and glorified, was astonished at your character and generosity with the guest and He sent this verse: *and they preferred (the fugitives) over themselves, even though poverty was their lot.*" (Q. 59:9)

Moses (A) said: "Show me the station of Muhammad (S)." (God) replied: "Thou wouldst not be able to endure it, but I shall show thee one of the lower stations." When He showed it, (Moses) was afraid that he would swoon from its brilliance and splendor. He said: "O Lord God! How was that obtained?" (God) said: "With generosity, O Moses. There is no servant who has been munificent once in his lifetime for whom I would not be ashamed to settle his account. His spiritual reward is Paradise, wherever he desires."

'Abdullah bin Ja'far[1252] (R) stopped at a date palm grove during a journey. A black slave was guarding it. They brought the slave three loaves of bread. A dog came in. That slave gave the dog one loaf to eat. He threw it another loaf to eat, and then he threw it the third. 'Abdullah said: "O slave, what art thou given each day?" He replied: "That which thou hast just seen. Three loaves of brad." ('Abdullah) asked: "Then why didst thou give all of it to the dog?" (The slave) answered: "There is no dog here. It has come from far away. I did not want it to remain hungry." ('Abdullah) asked: "What wilt thou do today?" He answered: "I shall be patient." ('Abdullah) said: "Glory be to God! They blame me for my generosity! This slave is more generous than I!" He ordered that the date palm grove be purchased. He bought the slave and freed him, and gave him that date palm grove.

The Messenger (S) was wary of assassination by the unbelievers. 'Ali (R) slept in his place in order to sacrifice himself should they make

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[1252] ᶜAbdullāh bin Jaᶜfar: Possibly, the man "about whom anecdotes were told," or another of the same name who died at Madinah in AH80/699-700CE. Both are mentioned in *The Fihrist*.

an assault.[1253] God, may He be honored and glorified, said to (the angels) Gabriel and Michael (R): "I have established brotherhood between you, but I have made the life of one of you longer than that of the other. Which of you will bestow that (on the other)?" Each one of them wanted the longer life for himself. God Most High said to them: "Why did ye not do what 'Ali (R) has done? I gave him as a brother to Muhammad (S), and ('Ali) has sacrificed his own life and bestowed it on (Muhammad) and has slept in his place. Both of you go to the earth and guard him from enemies." They came to earth. Gabriel stood by ('Ali's) pillow and Michael stood by his foot. They said: "How fortunate thou art, O son of Abu Talib![1254] For God Most High boasts of thee to His Own angels!" Then, this verse was revealed: *Of mankind is he who would sell himself seeking the pleasure of God [and God has compassion on His servants].* (Q. 2:207)

Husayn Antaki[1255] (R) was one of the great shaykhs. Of an evening, thirty-odd companions would gather around him. They did not have enough bread. What they had, they broke into pieces and offered it. They removed the lamp and sat down. When the lamp was brought back, the bread was as it was, for, out of munificence, no one had eaten anything so that his companion might eat.

Hudhayfah 'Adwa[1256] says: "On the day of the battle of Tabuk,[1257] many Muslims were martyred. I took up some water and sought my cousin. I found him a breath away from death. I said: "Dost thou want some water?" He said: "I do." Someone else cried: "Ah! I thirst!" (My cousin) pointed to him and said: "Take it to him." I did that.

[1253] This a reference to the famous incident during the migration of the Muslims from Makkah to Madinah. Most of them had already been sent ahead, but a few remained in Makkah including Abu Bakr, 'Ali, and the Prophet himself. The Quraysh leadership opposing the mission of the Prophet decided it would be an opportune time to assassinate the Prophet now that the most of his supporters had left Makkah. On the night before t the Prophet was to leave, 'Ali slept in the Prophet's bed wrapped in his green mantle while the Quraysh kept watch to catch the Prophet when he came out in the morning. When 'Ali came out instead, the guards were astonished. The Quraysh searched the city for the Prophet in vain. Meanwhile, the Prophet and Abu Bakr had spent the night in a cave, but that is another famous incident: the spider's web.

[1254] "son of Abu Talib": 'Ali was the son of Abu Talib.

[1255] Ḥusayn Antākī: Husayn of Antioch, the modern Antakya in southern Turkey. No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1256] Ḥudhayfah ʿAdwā: No other information about him from available standard sources at present. Presumably, not the same as Hudhayfah bin al-Yaman, see Note 1043.

[1257] Battle of Tabuk: occurred during the expedition led by the Prophet (S) in AH9/630CE, less then two years before his death. Tabuk is located in the northwestern Hijaz in modern Saudi Arabia. It was the first major brush of the nascent Muslim commonwealth with the outskirts of the Byzantine Empire. It was also a station on the Hijaz railroad dismantled by Lawrence of Arabia during the First World War (1914-1918).

It was Hisham bin al-'As.[1258] He was near giving up his life. I said: "Have some water." Someone cried: "Ah!" Hisham said with a sign that I should take the water to that person. I went to him, but he had died. When I returned to Hisham, he had died, and when I returned to my cousin, he had also died."

It is said that no one leaves this world as he entered it except Bishr Hafi (R). At the time of his death, a beggar came in asking for something. (Bishr) had nothing but a tunic. He took it off and gave it to him. He sought to borrow a garment and received the command.[1259]

Disclosing the Definition of Generosity and Miserliness and Who Is Generous and Who Is Miserly

Know that everyone thinks himself generous while others consider him a miser. Consequently, it is necessary that the truth about this be ascertained—for (miserliness) is a great illness. So long as it is not diagnosed, it is not treated. There is no one who will give away all that he possesses. If he becomes a miser because of this,[1260] everyone is a miser. So, in this regard a great deal has been said. Most of it is of the opinion that whoever withholds that which the Law has made his obligation (to give) is a miser. If he can give easily, he is not a miser. In our opinion, this is not praiseworthy. Whoever returns bread to a baker and meat to a butcher (claiming) that (the seller) has not given full weight is a miser.[1261] Whoever does not give the expenses for his wife and children as the judge has stipulated, and refuses a single morsel of that, is a miser. Whoever has bread before him and hides it when a poor man appears in the distance is a miser. Therefore, the correct opinion is that he is a miser who does not give what he can and what ought to be given.

Wealth has been created for a wise purpose. When wisdom necessitates giving, withholding is miserliness. That which can and should be given is that which the Law—or generosity—commands must be given. The duty of the Law is plain. The Law has limited itself to that amount which misers have not the strength to endure, as He said: *If He should ask it of you and importune you, ye would hoard it and He would expose your ill will.* (Q. 47:37)

[1258] Hishām bin al-ʿĀs bin Wā'il al-Sahmī: According to Ibn Ishaq, with several others, he planned to accompany 'Umar bin Khattab when the latter emigrated to Madinah, but apostasized and stayed back. Ibn Ishaq does not mention his participation in the events at Tabuk. (Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*, p. 216. See bibliography.)

[1259] "he received the command": that is, he died.

[1260] "this": his not giving away everything he possessed.

[1261] The AA text reverses this sentence: "If he cannot give easily, he is a miser."

As for the duty of generosity, it becomes miserliness according to the amount of wealth one possesses. There are many things which are customarily unbecoming in the wealthy, but not in the poor; or are unbecoming with one's kith and kin, but not with strangers; or are unbecoming with friends, but not with others; or are unbecoming with guests, but the like are not unbecoming in selling and transactions; or are unbecoming amongst the elderly, but not amongst the young; or are unbecoming amongst men, but not amongst women.

Therefore, the standard limit of this is that the preservation of the wealth be the object, but there may be a motive that is a greater object than the preservation of wealth. When that motive is more important, holding on (to wealth) is miserliness. When its preservation is more important, spending is extravagance. Both of these are despicable.

So, when a guest arrives, observing (the requirements of) generosity are more important than holding on to (money). One's withholding with the excuse that "I have not paid the poor tax yet" is unbecoming and is miserliness. When one's neighbor is hungry, and one has plenty of food, withholding (food from the neighbor) is miserliness.

However, when one has fulfilled the requirements of the Law and generosity and there is still much wealth, seeking the spiritual reward of the Hereafter through voluntary charity is important. Holding on to money against changes of fortune is also important, but, in the opinion of the saints, giving precedence to this over the object of spiritual reward is miserliness; but in popular opinion it is not miserliness.

Thus, if one confines oneself to the duties of the Religious Law and generosity, one escapes (the taint of) miserliness, but one attains the level of generosity when one exceeds those (obligations of giving). One attains a degree in generosity according to how much he exceeds (the required). Each person will obtain a spiritual reward according to his own amount, whether it be small or great. Generous, then, is the person who does not regret his giving. If one is compelled to give, it is not generosity. If one expects praise, gratitude, and reciprocity, it is not generosity. The openhanded and the generous are, in truth, those who give without any motive. This is impossible for a human being. Rather, it is an attribute of God Most High. However, when a person is content with the spiritual reward of the Hereafter and a good reputation, it is sufficient. He is called generous metaphorically, for in fact, he does not seek any compensation. In this world, that is generosity.

As for generosity in religion, it is that one not fear to sacrifice oneself for the love of God Most High without any expectation of compensation. The love for God Most High itself is one's motive. Self-sacrifice is the motivation itself and its own pleasure. When one expects something, it is barter, not generosity.

Disclosing the Treatment of Miserliness

Know that this treatment is also a compound of knowledge and practice:

The knowledge, which is first, is recognizing the cause of the miserliness, for no sickness can be treated when the cause is not known. The cause is love for the carnal appetites, for they cannot be satisfied without wealth, and also the hope for a long life. If the miser knew that nothing was left of his life but a day or a year, it would be easier for him to part with his money, unless he has children. In that case, he would consider the survival of his son as the survival of himself and his miserliness would become even more firmly established. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "A child is a mine of miserliness, cowardice, and ignorance."

Sometimes a vain appetite is born of the love for wealth, or not for an appetite: the wealth itself becomes his beloved. There is many an old man who knows that he has enough money for as long as he will live and that his income and his estates will be sufficient for his wife and children until the Resurrection, irrespective of the heavy expenses he bears. But if he falls ill, he does not seek treatment, nor does he pay the poor rate. His passion is keeping gold buried in the earth. Even though he knows that he will (surely) die, nonetheless, his miserliness prevents him from spending of that. This is a great sickness, which is infrequently cured.

Now that thou hast understood the cause, the treatment for the love of the carnal appetites may be accomplished with a little contentment and enduring the abandonment of the carnal appetites until one becomes indifferent to wealth. The treatment for the expectations of life lies in one's frequent reflection upon death. One should not look to his peers, for they were heedless, just as he. They died suddenly and were filled with regret, and their enemies divided their wealth unjustly.

The fear of poverty for one's children may be treated with the knowledge that He Who created them also appointed their sustenance for them. If poverty has been decreed, they will not become wealthy from (their father's) miserliness. Instead, they will waste the money. If wealth has been decreed, it will appear from another place. He does not notice that there are many rich persons who have not received any inheritance from their fathers and there are many persons who had received inheritances, but have lost all of them. He realizes that if the child is obedient to God Most High, that itself will suffice. Otherwise, poverty may be to his religious and worldly advantage, lest he spend his wealth for corrupt purposes.

One should also reflect upon other Traditions that have come down (to us) concerning the baseness of miserliness and in praise of generosity. (The Traditions) hold that the place of the miser is none other

than hell, even if he is devout (in the performance of religious obligations). What benefit is there or will there be in wealth taking precedence over buying thyself back from hell and into the pleasure of God Most High?

One should reflect more about the circumstances of misers, how displeasing they are to the hearts (of men) and how despised they are in the eyes of others. Everyone is hostile to them and censures them. He must comprehend that, like them, he too is displeasing, abject, and closefisted in the hearts and eyes of the people.

PRACTICAL TREATMENTS: When one has reflected upon these fully, if the illness is not of long duration so that it be untreatable, his desire to spend must be stimulated. He must be apply himself to the practical treatment. He must hold to the first impulse[1262] and begin to spend quickly. Abu al-Hasan Bushanjah[1263] (R) was in a toilet. He called to a disciple, saying: "Take my shirt and give it to a poor person." (The disciple) said: "Why dost thou not wait until thou come out?" He replied: "I am afraid that another impulse might appear, preventing that."

It is not possible to abandon miserliness without giving away wealth. Just as a lover will not escape love until he goes on a journey that separates him from his beloved, the treatment for the love of money is also separation—from money. In truth, it is better for him to throw it into the sea and escape the love for (money) than to hold on to his miserliness.

Amongst the benign stratagems, remedies, and methods, one is to deceive one's self with a good name and say: "Spend, so that people will call thee generous think thee good." Let the greed for dissimulation and rank overcome the greed for wealth so that when one escapes the latter, he may then treat the dissimulation, as a child is given something consoling, something that he likes, when he is weaned from milk, so that in busying himself with that he will forget the milk. This is a good way to treat meanness of character. One trait overcomes another trait so that one may escape the strength of the former. It is as when, if blood cannot be washed out of clothing with water, it is washed with urine until (the blood) is washed out. Then, the urine is washed out with water.

Whoever cuts off miserliness from himself with dissimulation has washed filth with filth, but when the dissimulation does not become established, he has profited. Indeed, even if the hypocrisy becomes

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[1262] "the first impulse" (*khāṭir-i awwāl*): among the Sufis, a spiritual visitation (*wārid*) that appears in the soul without previous thought or plan. It may be inspired divinely, by angels, or the senses, or Satan. Ghazzali is obviously referring to it in a positive sense.

[1263] Abu al-Hasan Bushanjah: ʿAlī bin Aḥmad bin Sahl Abū al-Ḥasan Būshanjah or Būshanjī. A contemporary and disciple of Abu 'Ali Daqqaq. (See Note 1241 on Abu Sa'id Khargushi.)

established, he has profited, even though miserliness and the pride from fine praise are from the world[1264] of human nature. However, in the world of mankind, there are both dung heaps and flower gardens. Miserliness is the dung heap of the world of human nature and generosity for one's good name is the flower garden of the world of human nature. Generosity with hypocrisy is not forbidden. It is forbidden in acts of worship, and that is all. Giving and possessing for the sake of God are outside of the world of human nature, and are fully praiseworthy.

So, it is not proper to object to a miser, saying: "So-and-so spends for show," for spending for show is better than parsimony and miserliness without dissimulation, just as being in a flower garden is better than being in a dung heap. The treatment of miserliness is that which has been said: perseverance and taking pains to give until it becomes one's nature.

Some shaykhs have treated their disciples by not permitting anyone a separate chamber which he could set his heart upon. When he would see that (a disciple) do that, he would send him to another chamber and give his chamber to another. He would see new footgear on (a disciple's) foot that (the disciple) kept admiring. (The shaykh) would order him to give them to another.

The Messenger (S) put fine straps on his footgear, then his eye fell on them while (engaged) in formal prayer. He ordered the old straps replaced and he threw out the new. When *he* does thus, it is plain that there is no remedy for cutting off the heart from property except giving of oneself to God. So long as the hand is not free from wealth, the heart will not be free. It is for this reason that the poor person is more fearless. However, when he has accumulated wealth, he turns into a miser. As long as he is not (wealthy), his heart is free of that.

A turquoise goblet decorated with jewels was given to a king as a gift. There was no equal to it in the world. A sage was present. (The king) said: "O wise man! How dost thou see this goblet?" He replied: "I see it as a disaster in the company of deprivation. So long as thou didst not possess it, thou wert safe from both." "Why?" demanded (the king). "Because if it is broken, it would be a disaster that it no longer exists. If it is stolen, it would be deprivation and a craving until it came to hand again." Then it so happened that the goblet was accidentally smashed and that king became very distressed about that. He said: "The wise man spoke the truth."

[1264] "the world" (*kūy*): The Persian word indicates a town, village, quarter, district, or neighborhood. Metaphorically, it sometimes means "world" in a restrictive sense, as we are using it here. In modern Persian, it is used for a lane or a (usually planned) neighborhood. Perhaps the Spanish word *barrio*, for which there is no exact English equivalent, would correspond more to Ghazzali's usage here.

DISCLOSING THE INCANTATIONS OF WEALTH

Know that the likeness of wealth is that of a snake in which there is both poison and medicine, as we have said. Whoever does not know the incantation for the snake and seizes one in his hand will be destroyed. It is for this reason that it is not proper for someone to say: "Amongst the Companions, there were some who were rich, such as 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf (R) and the likes of him. Therefore, there is no fault in being rich." This is as though a child, seeing a magician who takes a snake in his hands and puts it in a basket, thinks that (the magician) picks it up because it is soft and feels good in his hands. He goes to pick it up too, and is suddenly killed.

THE INCANTATIONS OF WEALTH are five:

FIRST: That one know that for which wealth has been created. As we have said, it is for the provision of food, clothing, housing, and the necessities of the human body. The body is for the senses, and the senses are for the intellect, and the intellect is for the soul, so that it may be adorned with the spiritual knowledge of God Most High. When one has learned this, the soul becomes firm inside one according to one's objective and utilizes its wisdom in that objective.

SECOND: That one examine (one's) income so (to be sure) that it does not come from the forbidden, or from the doubtful, or is not earned in a manner in which virtue would be impugned—such as by bribery, begging, payment for cupping, or the like.

THIRD: That one watch the amount so that it does not exceed need. One should recognize that everything which is in excess of need—that which is not needed for preparing the provisions for the way of religion—is the right of the needy. Should a needy person appear, that which is superfluous to one's needs should not be withheld from him. If one does not have the power to be munificent, one should not stint in a time of need.

FOURTH: That one keep expenditures so they are not other than economical. One should be content with little and spend rightfully, for spending unrightfully is the same as earning unrightfully.

FIFTH: That one declare that the intention concerning income, expenditure, and saving be just and good. One should earn that which one earns for the comfort of the family. One should hold onto that which one holds onto for piety, for disdaining the world, and so that one's heart may be protected from concern about having (money) in order that one

may apply oneself to the remembrance of God Most High. That which is retained is kept for some important need in the way of religion and for facilitating the way of religion. One waits for the need in order to spend on it. When one does thus, wealth does one no injury and one's portion of wealth is a medicine, not a poison.

It was for this that 'Ali Murtada[1265] (R) said: "If a person obtains all the wealth on the face of the earth and gives it away in the way of God Most High, he is an ascetic, even though he be the richest of mankind. If he gives up everything, but not in the way of God Most High, he is not an ascetic.

Therefore the prayer-direction of the soul must be worship and the provision for the Hereafter so that every move one makes—if all is defecating or eating food—all are worship and one obtains spiritual reward for all of them, because the way of religion has need of all of them. The intention is what counts.[1266] Since most people are unable to do this and do not know these incantations and prescriptions, or they know them but are unable to implement them, it is preferable that they shun great wealth as much as possible. For, if an abundance of wealth does not carry them to hubris and negligence, still it will decrease their standing in the Hereafter. This would be a total loss.

When 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf received the command[1267] he left behind a vast wealth. Some of the Companions said: "We fear for him because of the great wealth that he has left." Ka'b Ahbar (R) said: "Glory be to God! What art thou afraid of? He obtained the wealth lawfully and expended it justly. What is there to fear?" The news was brought to Abu Dharr (R). He came out of his house angrily brandishing a camel bone. He leaped at Ka'b to hit him. Ka'b fled from him and went into the house of 'Uthman 'Affan and hid behind him. Abu Dharr entered and cried: "Have a care, O son of a Jew! Thou sayest: 'What is there to fear about that which 'Abd al-Rahman left behind?' The Messenger (S) was going to Uhud one day and I was with him. He said: 'O Abu Dharr!' I said: '*At thy service, O Messenger of God.*' He said: 'The rich are fewer and more turned back at the Resurrection, save those who strew and expend their money behind and before them and to their right and to their left. O Abu Dharr, I do not want to possess gold as much as Mount Uhud and spend all of it in the way of God Most High and have even two karats left at the time I die.' Thus spoke the Messenger and thou, son of a Jew, sayest that! Thou liest and thou art a liar!" He said that and no one replied to him.

[1265] ʿAlī Murtaḍā: 'Ali the Approved, 'Ali bin Abi Talib, the son-in-law of the Prophet. See Note 395.

[1266] "the intention is what counts": lit., "the act has the intention" (*kār nīyat dārad*).

[1267] "received the command": died.

Once a caravan of camels belonging to 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf (R) returned from trading in Yemen. Shouting and triumphs erupted in Madinah. 'Ayishah (R) asked: "What is going on?" She was told that it is the camels of 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf. She said: "The Messenger (S) spoke truly." 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf heard of what 'Ayishah had said. He worried about these words and immediately went to 'Ayishah (R) and said: "What did the Messenger say, O 'Ayishah?" She replied: "The Messenger said: 'Heaven was shown to me. I saw the poor of the Companions walking and running rapidly (into heaven), but I saw no rich person except 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf, who was not able to walk. He was crawling on his hands and feet until he entered heaven." 'Abd al-Rahman said: "O 'Ayishah, I have given away as charity those camels and all that they brought and that was loaded upon their backs. I have freed all of the slaves that accompanied the camels so that it may be that I too will be able to go with (the Companions into heaven)." And the Messenger (S) said to 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf: "The first of the wealthy of my people to enter will be thou, and thou wilt not be able to enter save by effort, stratagem, and crawling."

One of the great of the Companions says: "I do not wish to earn a thousand dinars a day lawfully and spend it in the way of God Most High, even if I am not prevented from performing the congregational obligatory formal prayers and fasting." He was asked why. He said: "So that at the place of questions and answers they not ask me: 'My servant, whence didst thou obtain it and for what didst thou spend it?' I would not have the strength to endure those questions and that reckoning."

The Messenger (S) said: "A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection whose property was earned from the unlawful and spent for the unlawful and he will be carried off to hell. Another will be brought who had accumulated his wealth unlawfully, but spent it lawfully. He will be sent to hell. Another will be brought who earned his wealth lawfully, but spent it unlawfully. He will be carried off to hell. Then a fourth will be brought who earned lawfully and spent lawfully and justly. It will be said: 'Hold this one, for it may be that in the quest for wealth, or in his purification, or his formal prayers, or in his bows or prostrations there is some shortcoming and they were not performed at the proper times or according to the rules.' He will say: 'O Lord, I earned from the lawful and I have not committed a fault in any religious obligation.' (The accuser) will say: 'Perhaps thou hadst a silken garment, a horse and luxury, and swaggered on the path of pride and self-glorification.' He will say: 'O Lord God, I have not omitted anything in any religious duty and I have not gloried in my wealth.' (The interrogator) will say: 'Perhaps thou hast committed some fault with respect to an orphan, a destitute person, a neighbor, or a relative.' He will say: 'O Lord God, I have gotten it from the lawful and I have spent it justly and I have not committed any fault in religious duties. I did not glory in this wealth, and

I have not committed a fault with anyone.' Then all those will come forward and contend with him, saying: 'O Lord God, amongst us Thou didst give him wealth and comfort. Ask him on our behalf.' Each one will be enquired about. If he has not committed any fault, they will say: 'Now it is necessary that thou bringest thanks for these blessings and for every morsel that thou atest and for every pleasure that thou obtainedst. Bring thanks for them!' In that way he will be questioned, he will be questioned..."

This was the reason that none of the saints desired wealth, for if there is no torment, there is the reckoning in that manner. Indeed, the Messenger (S), who is the exemplar of the people, chose poverty for that reason so that his people would know that poverty is better.

'Imran bin Hasin[1268] (R) says: "I had a familiar relationship with the Messenger (S). One day he said to me: 'Let us visit Fatimah.' We went and when we reached the door, he knocked and said: '*Peace be upon thee*, may we come in?' She said: 'Come in!' He said: "I and that person who is with me?' She said: 'O Messenger of God, I am not wearing anything on all of my body except an old coarse cloth.' He said: 'Cover thy head and wrap thyself with it.' She said: 'I have covered my body but my head is bare.' The Messenger (S) threw an old wrapper to her and she covered her head with it. Then they entered and he said: 'How art thou, my dear child?' She said: 'I am sick and in pain, and my misery is increased because I am hungry. As I am sick, I cannot find anything to eat. I do not have the strength to endure the hunger.' The Messenger (S) wept and said: 'Do not worry, Fatimah, for by God it has been three days since I ate anything, and I am more beloved by God Most High than thou. If I were to ask, He would give, but I have chosen the Hereafter over this world.' Then he placed his hand on her shoulder and said: 'I give thee good news: By God Most High, thou wilt be the mistress of the women of the inhabitants of Paradise.' She said: 'What about Asiyah the wife of Pharaoh and Mary the mother of Jesus?' He said: 'Each of them is the mistress of the women of her own world. Thou art the mistress of the women of thine own world, all of you in your quarters, adorned with fine linen. In that place, there shall be neither shouting, nor sorrow, nor labor.' Then he said: 'Let thy cousin and thy husband[1269] with whom I have joined thee suffice, for he is a master in this world and a master in the Hereafter.'"

It has been related that a man said to Jesus (A): "I wish to accompany thee." They set off together until (they reached) the bank of a

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[1268] ʿImrān bin Ḥasīn: a Companion of the Prophet. He became a Muslim in AH7/628-9CE and became a scholar of religious law. ʿUmar bin Khattab sent him to Basrah to instruct the people there and he earned the praise of Hasan al-Basri and Ibn Sirin. In the civil war between Muʿawiyah and ʿAli he was neutral, but tried to stop the fighting.

[1269] The husband of Fatimah was her cousin ʿAli bin Talib, who became the fourth caliph.

stream. They had three round loaves of bread and ate two of them. Then Jesus went down to the water's edge in order to purify himself. When he returned he did not see the bread. He said: 'Who took the bread?' (The man) said: "I do not know." So, they went from that place and (met) a doe coming with two fawns. Jesus (A) called to one of the fawns of that doe and it came to him. He slaughtered it immediately and roasted it. Both ate their fill. Then (Jesus) said: "O fawn, become alive again by the command of God Most High!' It came alive again and ran off. He said to that man: "By that God Who showed thee this miracle, tell me what happened to that bread." He said: "I do not know." They went away from that place and came upon a river. Jesus (A) took him by the hand and both of them walked on the water. (Jesus) said: "By that God Who has shown thee this miracle, tell me what happened to the bread." He said: "I do not know." They went away from that place and reached a place where there was much sand. Jesus (A) gathered that sand and said: "By the command of God, become gold!" All of the sand became gold. Then he divided it into three parts and said: "One portion is for me, one portion is for thee, and one portion is for him who has the bread." Greedy for the gold, the man confessed and said: "I have the bread." Jesus (A) said: "All three portions are thine." He left all three with him and departed.

Two men came upon that man and wanted to slay him and carry off the gold. He said: "Do not kill me so that each one may have a portion." Then they said: "Let us send one of us to buy some food." One of them went and bought food. He said to himself: "What a pity that they carry off that gold. I shall put poison in the food. When they eat it, they will die and I will take all of the gold." (Meanwhile) the other two were saying to each other: "For what reason must we give him the gold? When he comes back let us kill him and take his portion." When the other returned, they slew him and ate the poisoned food he had brought back and fell dead, but the gold remained. Then Jesus (A) passed by with his disciples. The gold was still where it had been left and the three men, slain and dead. He said: "O Companions, this world is thus! Beware of it!" So, from this story it is apparent that even if a man is a teacher and is resolute, it is better that he not look at wealth and that he not approach it, beyond the amount of need, for the end of a snake charmer is destruction from the snake. *Peace!*

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TREATMENT OF THE LOVE FOR RANK AND RETINUE

Know that most of the people who have been brought to ruin have been in search of rank, retinue, good reputation, and popular praise. For that reason they have fallen into vying with one another, enmity, and many sins. When the passion for this has become dominant, the path of religion is cut off and the soul is tainted by hypocrisy and a treacherous character.[1270]

The Messenger (S) said: "The love for rank and property causes hypocrisy to grow in the soul as water causes leeks to grow." And he (S) said: "Two hungry wolves in a flock of sheep do not wreak as much destruction as the love for wealth and rank in the soul of a Muslim man." And he (S) said to 'Ali (R): "People have been destroyed by two things: pursuing their lusts and their love for adulation. A person is liberated from these calamities who does not seek fame and is content with obscurity." For God Most High says: *The Last Abode; We have made that for those who desire not elevation on the earth nor corruption; the outcome for the god-fearing.* (Q. 28:83) (God) said: "We have set the happiness of the Hereafter for a person who does not seek greatness or rank in the world and does not seek corruption." The Messenger (S) said: "The inhabitants of heaven are those persons who carry no weight. If they request permission to enter houses, they are turned away. If they seek in marriage, none will give them his daughter. If they speak, no one listens to their words. (Yet) if the light of their countenances were divided among all mankind, they would (all) be saved on the Day of Resurrection."[1271]

And he (S) said: "Many a (person in a) dusty threadbare garment, if he were to swear by God and desire Paradise, would be granted that, but if he desired something from the world, he would not (be granted that). And he said: "There are many persons among my people to whom ye would not give a dirham or a grain if they asked it of you, but if they ask for Paradise from God Most High, He will give it to them. If they want some thing of this world, He will not give it, but it is not because of their humbleness that He will not give them the world."

[1270] "a treacherous character" (*khiyānat-i akhlāq*). AA has "a wicked character" (*khabīthat-i akhlīq*).

[1271] AA gives a somewhat different version of this extraordinary tradition: "The inhabitants of heaven are dusty persons with disheveled hair and in dirty clothes; no one gives them any weight. If they seek to permission to enter the mansions of princes, they are turned away. If they seek in marriage, none will give them his daughter. If they speak, no one listens to their words; yet, their aspirations foam and beat like waves in their breasts. If the light of their countenances were divided amongst all mankind, it would reach all." This is rather closer to the corresponding Arabic text in *The Revival*.

'Umar entered a mosque. He saw Mu'adh (R) weeping. ('Umar) said: "Why art thou weeping, O Mu'adh?" He answered: "I heard the Messenger (S) say: 'A little of hypocrisy is polytheism and God Most High loves the unknown pious, for if they are absent, no one looks for them; if they are present, no one recognizes them. Their hearts are lamps for the path of Guidance and they have been delivered from all doubts and torments." Ibrahim Adham (R) says: "Whoever loves appetite and good repute is not sincere in God's religion." Job (A) said: "The sign of sincerity is that one not desire anyone to know him."

A group of Ubayy bin Ka'b's students were following him. 'Umar (R) saw him and struck him with his scourge. (Ubayy) said "Look at what thou art doing, O Commander of the Believers!" ('Umar) said: "This is a degradation for the follower and a temptation for the preceder."[1272] Hasan Basri (R) says: "In no manner can the heart of every fool who sees himself being followed (by admirers) remain true."

Job (A) was on a journey with a crowd of people following him. He said: "If it were not that God Most High knows of me that I detest this, I would fear the anger of God." Thawri (R) says: "The forefathers detested clothing which would be conspicuous, either for oldness or for newness. Rather, it should be that which does not cause anyone to comment about it." Bishr Hafi (R) says: "I do not know anyone who likes people to recognize him whose religion does not become corrupt and who does not become disgraced."

Disclosing the True Nature of Rank

Behold, the meaning of being "rich"[1273] is that the chattels of wealth are one's property, under one's control, and in one's power. The meaning of being "great" and "honored" is that the souls of people are one's property. That is, they are subject to him and his control of them is lawful. When someone's heart has become subject to another person, body and property follows that. The heart does not become subject to another until it has good faith in that person by which (that person's) greatness enters into his soul because of the perfection that exists in him, either in knowledge, in worship, in good character, in strength, or some (other) thing which people consider perfection and greatness. When he has arrived at this belief, his heart is made subject and he has the desire to obey and adore him. He praises and lauds him with his tongue and lends his body to his service. He is determined to sacrifice wealth for him so that, just as a slave is subject to his owner, the disciple and the friend are subservient to the honored one. Moreover, the subservience of the

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[1272] That is, it is humiliating for those following him and a temptation or a seduction for the soul of the person who is followed, perhaps leading him to arrogance and pride.

[1273] "rich": the Persian word *tawāngar* means "rich, wealthy, great, powerful."

slave is by compulsion, but *his* subservience is by (voluntary) obedience and nature. Therefore, the meaning of wealth is the possession of its chattels and the meaning of rank is the possession of the hearts of the people.

Rank is more beloved than wealth to most of mankind for three reasons:

ONE is that wealth is loved because all needs may be fulfilled with it, and it is the same for rank. Indeed, obtaining wealth becomes easy for whoever obtains rank. However, if a base person desires to obtain rank through wealth, it is difficult.

THE SECOND is that wealth is susceptible to destruction. A thief may carry it away, or it may be used and exhausted, but rank is secure from all of these.

THE THIRD is that wealth does not increase without the pains of trade and agriculture, while rank spreads and increases. For, whoever's heart has become captivated by thee roams the world and speaks thy praises so that others too become captivated without seeing (thee). However much thy name becomes more famous, (thy) rank increases and that which follows from that increases. So, both rank and wealth are desirable because they are the means (of fulfilling) all needs, but it is imbued in human nature that one desires that his fame and rank reach faraway cities, even though he knows that he himself will never go to those parts. He desires that the entire world be his property, even though he knows that he will never have need of it. This is a great mystery. Its cause is that humanity is of the essence of angels and one of the divine works, as He said: *Say: The Spirit is by the command of my Lord.* (Q. 17:85) Therefore, because of the excess of the relationship (the soul) has with the Divine Presence, seeking divinity is its nature. In everyone's inner being there is that inside which Pharaoh said: *"I am your Lord Most High!"* (Q. 79:24) Thus, everyone naturally loves divinity.

The meaning of "divinity" is that it is everything and there is nothing else with it. For if another appears, there is an imperfection (in its absoluteness). The perfection of the sun is that it is one, and all light comes from it. If there were another with it, (the sun) would (necessarily) be imperfect.[1274] The perfection of its uniqueness is (also) a characteristic of divinity, for it is true existence and nothing else. There is no other in existence with it, other than it. All that is, is the illumination of its power; therefore (divinity) depends upon Him, and is not with Him; just as the light of the sun is dependent upon the sun and the light is not another

[1274] "imperfect": that is, the existence of another sun would detract from its perfect or absolute singularity.

entity with respect to the sun and is (co-existent) with it together. Its[1275] appearance would be an imperfection (in the sun).

There is this in the nature of a human being that requires him to desire that he be everything. Since he is incapable of this, he desires that everything be his; that is, that everything be subservient to him and under his control and (subject to) his will. However, he is incapable of achieving this also, for there are two kinds of existing things:

ONE KIND is that which the control of man does not touch, such as the heavens, stars, the substances of the angels and the devils, and that which is beneath the earth, at the depths of the oceans, and under mountains. Therefore, man desires to conquer all of these through knowledge so that they come under the control of his knowledge, even though they are not in his power. For this reason, he desires that the kingdoms of heaven and earth, the wonders of the land and sea, all be made known, just as a person who is incapable of arranging the chess pieces, but wishes in all events to know how they have been placed, for this too is a kind of mastery.

THE SECOND KIND is that over which a person may gain control: the surface of the earth and all that it is on it of plants, animals, and minerals. A person desires that all (of that) be his property; that is, under his control so that he may have the perfection of power and dominion over all. And, of all the things upon the earth, the most valuable are the people's souls.[1276] He desires that they to be the place of his control so that they will always be engaged in remembering him. The meaning of rank is this.

So, a human being, by his nature, loves the divinity that they attribute to him and it is from this that "presence" comes.[1277] The meaning of divinity is that all perfection is his. Perfection lies in mastery, and all of mastery comes through knowledge and power. The power of a person is through wealth and rank. Therefore, the cause of his love for these lies in that.

EXCURSUS: [THE PEOPLE IN QUEST OF RANK TRAVEL THE PATHWAY OF LOSS]

If a person says that since the quest for the perfection of divinity is human nature, and that is not possible save with knowledge and power,

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[1275] "its": the light's appearance as a separate entity.

[1276] "souls" (*dil-hā*): or, "hearts."

[1277] In this passage, Al-Ghazzali is likening human ambition for mastery and rule to a desire for divinity. The term "presence" (*ḥaḍrat*) is intended to remind the reader of "the divine presence," although it is also applied to exalted humans.

and that seeking knowledge is laudable for it is the seeking for perfection, then, the quest for rank and wealth must also be laudable, for that too is a quest for power, and power is also a part of perfection and of the attributes of God, as is knowledge. The more perfect the servant (of God), the nearer he is to God Most High.

The reply to this is that knowledge and power, both are perfections and of the attributes of divinity. However, there is a way for a person to true knowledge, but there is not a way to true power. Knowledge is a perfection that it may be possible for a person to acquire and then to retain. However, power is not acquired. Rather, one thinks that it has been acquired, but then it does not stay with a person. For, power is dependent upon wealth and people, and it will be cut off from him at death. Whatever is invalidated by death is not a part of the Lasting Good Deeds.[1278] Spending time in the quest for such things is ignorance.

Therefore, that amount of power is useful that is the means of acquiring knowledge. Knowledge is (acquired) by the application of the soul, not the body, and the soul endures and is everlasting. When a savant departs from this world, the knowledge remains (with him). That knowledge is his light by which he sees the Divine Presence so as to obtain the pleasure (in comparison) to which all of the other pleasures of Paradise fall short. Knowledge has no dependency upon anything that will be voided at death, for neither wealth nor the hearts of people are attached to knowledge. Rather, it is the essence of God Most High, His attributes, His wisdom in the dominion and the kingdom, and the wonders of the probabilities in the possible, the necessary, and the impossible. For, they are timeless and eternal. They never change because the necessary never becomes impossible; nor the impossible, possible. However, knowledge that is connected with created, transitory things has no weight, such as, for example, the knowledge of language. For language is created and transitory, its weight is that it is the means of knowing the Book[1279] and the Practice (of the Prophet). Knowing the Book and the Practice is knowing God Most High and the cutting away of the obstacles on the path to Him.

Therefore, knowledge of whatever is susceptible to change and annihilation is not the object. Rather, it is subordinate to the knowledge of Eternity without beginning.[1280] The knowledge of Eternity without beginning is one of the Lasting Good Works and (a part) of the Divine Presence, which is eternal without beginning and eternal without end,

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[1278] "lasting good deeds " (*bāqiyāt-i ṣāliḥāt*): i.e., good deeds with the eternal effect of a spiritual reward in the afterlife.

[1279] "the Book": The Holy Quran.

[1280] "knowledge of Eternity without a beginning" (*ʿilm-i azalīyāt*): the knowledge of that which is infinite without beginning or commencement; knowledge of the timeless; divine knowledge.

and unaffected by change. So, the more a person knows about Eternity, the nearer he approaches God Most High. He truly has knowledge, but he does not truly have power, except one kind of power, that which is one of the Lasting Good Works: that is freedom; being freed from the power the carnal appetites. Whoever has become a prisoner of appetite is its slave. There will be some defect in whatever need he has because of it. Consequently, being liberated from that need and overpowering one's appetites is a perfection that is close to the attributes of God Most High and the attributes of the angels, in this respect: by reason of its being farther from change, alteration, and need, and its resembling more the angels. Therefore, true perfection is knowledge and spiritual insight, and also freedom from the power of the appetites.

As for wealth and rank, they display perfection but are not (perfect). Moreover, they do not endure after death. Therefore, people searching for perfection are excused. Indeed, they are commanded to do that, but they are ignorant of true perfection. They suppose to be perfection that which is not perfection. They have all turned their attention to that and have turned their backs on that which is (true) perfection. And so, they all travel the road to their own detriment. God Most High as said about this: *By the afternoon! Surely, man is in the way of loss.* (Q. 103:1-2)

Excursus: [An Adequate Amount of Rank Is Not Blameworthy]

Know that rank is like wealth. Just as all wealth is not blameworthy—indeed, an adequate amount of that is the provision for the Hereafter, while an excess of that, so that the soul becomes absorbed in it, is a highwayman on the road to the Hereafter. It is the same for rank. A person cannot escape having someone who serves him, a friend who assists him, or a ruler who protects him from oppressors. He must certainly have some esteem in the hearts of these people. The quest for rank in the hearts of these people for that which will allow him to achieve his objectives is lawful, as Joseph (A) said: *"I am a good keeper, knowing well."* (Q. 12:55)

In the same way, a teacher will not instruct someone until he has some value in (the teacher's) heart, or a student will not learn from him until (the teacher) has (esteem) in (the student's) heart. Therefore, seeking an adequate amount of rank is permitted as is seeking an adequate amount of wealth; however, rank may be sought in four ways, two of which are forbidden and two allowed:

As for the two ways that are forbidden, one is that one seek rank by ostentatious acts of worship. This is hypocrisy. Worship should be purely for God. To seek rank and honor by means of that is forbidden. The second is that one be fraudulent and display oneself to the public in a character one does not possess. One says, for example: "I am a

descendant of 'Ali," or "So-and-so is of my lineage," or " I know such-and-such a craft," while one does not know it. All of this is as though he were seeking wealth fraudulently.

As for the two ways that are lawful, one is that one seek something without using false pretense or acts of worship. The other is that one conceal one's own defect, so that if one is a sinner, one conceals the sin so that he may have some office from the sovereign, not so that (the sovereign) suppose that he is an ascetic. This too is allowed.

Disclosing the Treatment for the Love of Rank

Know that the love for rank, when it dominates the soul, is an illness of the soul and requires treatment. For it shall certainly lead to hypocrisy, dissimulation, lies, false pretenses, enmity, envy, competition, and many sins; just as does the love for wealth. Indeed, it is worse, for it masters human nature.

A person who seeks wealth and rank in that amount in which the soundness of his religion lies and who does not desire more than that is not ill, for in reality he does not love wealth and rank; rather, he loves the leisure for the works of religion. But for a person who naturally loves rank and whose every thought is absorbed by how the people view him, what they say about him, and what they believe about him—whatever happens, his mind is with them to learn what people are saying (about him)—the treatment of this illness is a religious obligation. Its treatment is made up theory and practice:

AS FOR THE THEORETICAL, it is that one reflect upon the harm of rank to religion and the world. In the world, he who is constantly seeing rank is in the trouble and wretchedness of considering the opinions of the public.[1281] If he does not achieve rank, he remains abject. If he achieves it, he becomes a target and an object of envy. He will always be in the pain of enmity and fending off the attacks of his enemies. He is not safe from their tricks and treacheries. If one who is not free from attack is vanquished in some litigation, he himself will be humiliated. If he triumphs, there is no permanence in (his triumph), for rank is all dependent upon the hearts of the public, and the hearts of people change quickly: they are like the waves of the sea. A weak person may have a power which is founded upon the hearts of a few inconstant persons who may change that power at a whim, especially a person whose rank is governance and susceptible to dismissal. With a single suspicion that appears in the heart of the ruler, he will be dismissed and humiliated.

[1281] Like the modern politician who is obsessed with polls.

So, the seeker for rank is in distress in both this world and the Hereafter. All these weaklings cannot understand that. However, a person who himself possesses clear vision knows that if the kingdom of the face of the earth from east to west be his in certainty and unconditionally, and all its inhabitants prostrate themselves before him, it is not worth that delight, for when he dies, all of that will vanish, so that after a time, neither will he remain nor those who prostrated themselves before him, as the sultan who, when he is dead, is not remembered by anyone. Then, for a few days of pleasure, he has brought (his) eternal kingship to ruin.

The love for God Most High has departed from the soul of whoever has set his heart upon rank. When he goes to the other world with his love for God Most High overwhelmed by something else, his torment will be lengthy. The theoretic treatment is that which has been stated.

AS FOR THE PRACTICAL TREATMENTS, they are two: one is to flee from the place where one has his rank and go to another place where no one knows him. This is more complete, for if he goes into seclusion in his own town, when the people find out that he has abandoned his office, it will change into some evil for him. The sign of this is that if they criticize him or say that he is dissimulating, grief and sorrow will appear in his heart. If he is accused of some crime, he (must) offer an apology, even though (the accusation) was a lie so that people not have a bad opinion about him. All of this demonstrates that the love for rank is still present (in him).

The other treatment is that one resort to the way of reproach and do something so as to fall away from the people's notice; not that he should eat of the unlawful—as do some corrupt fools do who call themselves "the reproached"[1282]—but as, for example, an ascetic (did) in the olden days. The prince of the city came to greet him and give him gifts. When the prince came into view in the distance, the ascetic called for bread and leeks and began to eat rapidly in big bites. When the prince saw that he was so greedy, he lost faith in him and turned away.

Another found acceptance in a city and the people thronged to him. One day he emerged from the bathhouse having put on a fine garment belonging to a person who was in the bath. He came out and stood on a public thoroughfare in such a manner that he was seized and

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[1282] "the reproached" (*malāmatī*): persons who, in order to conceal their state from people, went to great lengths to hide their pious observances and acts of worship so that they would approach God more closely. As a part of this deception, their public behavior was such that people would reproach and rebuke them. They would not make a parade of anything good and would not hide anything bad. (Steingass: *malamati*: K.Kh., note Vol. II, p. 199.)

beaten and the clothing taken away from him. They said that he was a thief. Another colored lawful drink in a goblet the color of wine and drank it, so that they would think he was drinking wine. These and their like are the treatment to crush the greed for rank.

Disclosing the Treatment for the Love of Eulogy and Praise by the People and the Dislike of the Their Censure

Know that there is the person who is eager for the praise of the people and is continually seeking good repute, even though it be in some matter that is contrary to the Law. They dislike the public's rebuke, even though it be for an act that is just. This, too, is a sickness of the soul and its treatment will not be known so long as the cause of the pleasure and pain of the soul in praise and reproach does not become known.

Know that there are four reasons for the pleasure of praise:

THE FIRST REASON is that which we have said, that a human loves his own perfection and dislikes his own diminishment. Praise denotes perfection. It may be that he has some doubt concerning his own perfection and this pleasure is incomplete. When he hears (praise) from someone, he becomes certain (of his perfection), so that his soul comes to crave and be calmed by it. It becomes an absolute pleasure. When he has smelled the perfume of his own perfection, the effect of supreme power appears in himself, and supreme power is naturally loved. But, when he hears reproaches, he becomes aware of his own deficiency and for that reason becomes upset.

So, if one hears praise and rebukes from a person who is knowledgeable—as from a fair, learned teacher—and it is not exaggeration, one necessarily becomes more aware of sorrow and ease. But, when it is spoken by someone lacking in perspicacity, it does not have that pleasure, because certainty does not come from his words.

THE SECOND REASON is that praise demonstrates that the heart of the speaker is one's property and subservient to one, and that in (the praiser's) heart there is a place and honored rank for the man. Rank is beloved, so if the praise comes from some grandee, the pleasure is greater, as the power of possessing his heart is more complete, but if it comes from a base person, there is no pleasure in it.

THE THIRD REASON is that praise may be the glad tidings that one will ensnare other hearts. For, when someone offers (him) praise, others too will have good faith in him and this will spread. So, if the praise is public and from a person whose words are accepted (by the public), the pleasure is greater. Censure (in public) has the opposite (effect).

THE FOURTH REASON is that it shows that one has conquered the praiser because of his magnificence, and magnificence is also beloved, even if it be by compulsion. For even though he knows that (the praiser) does not believe that which he says, he likes (the fact) of the praiser's need to praise him and he considers it a part of the perfection of his power. Therefore, if one is praised for something that one knows to be a lie that no one would accept, and that it is said neither from the heart nor out of fear, but rather in ridicule; no pleasure will remain (from that), for all of the (above) reasons are absent.

Now that thou hast learned these reasons, thou wilt easily know the treatment; if thou makest the effort, thou wilt be able:

AS FOR THE FIRST REASON, the which we said, that at his words thou believest in thine own perfection, (the treatment is) that thou must reflect that if the traits which he is describing, such as knowledge and piety, are correct, thou shouldst take delight in those traits and in that God Who gave them to thee, not in thine eulogizer's words, for they will not be increased or diminished by anyone's words.

If thou art praised for thy wealth, lordship, or worldly goods, they themselves are not worth thy rejoicing. If they had value, one should rejoice in that thou wert given these things, not in the encomium. Indeed, a wise person, even though he knows his own knowledge and piety, does not rejoice (for that), out of the fear of the End, which is unknown. So long as that is not known, all of this is wasted.

For a person whose place will be in hell, what cause for joy is there for him? If one knows that one does not possess that attribute—such as knowledge or piety—rejoicing (in praise for that) is foolishness. One is like him to whom someone says: "This lord is a rare man and all the contents of his bowels are perfumed and fragrant," while he knows that they are filled with filth, and yet he takes delight in this lie! This is insanity itself!

AS FOR THE OTHER REASONS, their outcome is the love for rank and retinue, and the treatment for this has been discussed.

However, if a person rebukes one, his becoming saddened by and angry with (that person) is also done out of ignorance. For, if he speaks the truth, he is angel. If he lies and one knows that he is lying, he is a devil. If he does not know that he is uttering lies, he is an ass and a fool. As God Most High transforms a person into an ass, or a devil, or an angel, why shouldst thou be saddened? Therefore, if he speaks the truth, thou shouldst be saddened by the deficiency that is in thee. If the deficiency is religious, it is not (a result) of his words. If it is worldly, that to the religious is a virtue, not a defect!

Another treatment is that thou consider that that which he has said is not devoid of three conditions: If he speaks the truth and has spoken with kindness, one should be grateful to him. For, if a person informs thee that there is a snake in thy clothing, so that thou beware of it, thou art grateful. The defect which is in (thy) religion is worse than a snake, for it may be cause of thy ruin in the Hereafter. If thou goest to a king and someone says to thee: "O wearer of dirty clothes, sit and clean thy clothing," thou wouldst look (at it). The clothing is full of impurities. If thou hadst gone before the king in that condition, thou wouldst be in danger of being punished. Thou must be grateful to that person, for he has saved thee from that danger. But, if he is finding fault, thou also obtainest a benefit, just as if he had spoken the truth. His faultfinding is a betrayal of his own faith. So, when there is a benefit for thee and harm to him, thine anger is not required.

However, if he has spoken a lie, thou must reflect that if thou art free of this defect, thou hast many other defects which he does not know. Therefore, thou shouldst thank him profusely, for God Most High has dropped a veil over thine other defects and that person has presented thee with his own good deeds.[1283] If he had praised thee, it would have been the same as his killing thee. Why shouldst thou rejoice at being killed and be saddened by (his) gift (of the merit of his good deeds)? A person does this who sees appearances, not the essence, the spirit, and the truth. Whoever possesses intelligence is separated from the fools by this, for he sees the truth and spirit of affairs, not their appearance and form. In short, so long as greed for (good opinion of) people is not cut off, this illness will not depart from the soul.

Disclosing the Different Degrees of People Concerning Praise and Blame

Know that when listening to their praises, men are divided into four degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is the general population. They delight in praise and express their gratitude (for it). They become angry at rebuke and engage in retaliation for it. This is the worst of the degrees.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the degree of the abstemious, who half-rejoice at praise and become angry at reproach, but they do not expose it in action. They hold both equal, but in their hearts, they like one and resent the other.

[1283] When a person lies about another, the spiritual reward due the liar in the Hereafter for his good deeds is transferred to the victim of his lies, as Ghazzali has pointed out several times above.

THE THIRD DEGREE is the degree of the pious who hold both (praise and reproach) the same, both in their hearts and in their words. They do not take any umbrage at reproach, nor are they excessive in their reception of the eulogizer, for their hearts do not pay attention to praise, nor are they moved by reproach. This is a great degree.

Some devout persons suppose that they have achieved this degree, but they suppose wrongly. The sign of this (degree) is that if a detractor remains with them for a long time, they do not feel a weight in their hearts greater than they feel with a praiser. If he comes more infrequently, the seeking and longing in the heart for him is not less than that for the praiser. If they summon him in some matter, his assistance is not more difficult than that of a praiser. If he dies, their sadness at his death is not less than at the death of another. If he is caused trouble by someone, they are troubled for him as they would be for the praiser. If the praiser commits an error, it must not be taken more lightly. This is extremely difficult. It may happen that a devout person flatter himself and say: "My anger is because he is a rebel (against God) for this aspersion which he has cast!"

This is the deception of Satan, for in fact there are many persons who commit major sins and cast aspersions on others when they do not find that (particular) repugnance in themselves. This is the proof that it is the anger of the self, not the (righteous) anger of faith. Most of the efforts (in piety) of an ascetic who is ignorant of these niceties is wasted.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is the degree of the truly righteous who hold the eulogizer to be an enemy and the reproacher a friend because three benefits are gotten from (the latter): one is that they hear from him their own shortcomings, another is that he sends them (the spiritual reward of) his own good deeds as a gift, and (third), he has made them avid to seek purification from that fault and from those things which resemble it.

In the Traditions, it is related that the Messenger (S) said: "Woe unto the faster and unto him who performs formal prayers at night, and unto him who wears woolen cloth, except for him who has cut himself off from the world. He hates praise and loves the detractor."

This Tradition, if it be correct, is a difficult affair. For, attaining this degree is a hard task and very arduous. Indeed, attaining the second degree—which is not superficially different in appearance, even though it is different in the soul—is also difficult, for most often when something occurs, one inclines to a disciple or a eulogizer, and also in transactions.

No one will attain the last degree except a person who has exercised hostility against his own self, which has become his own enemy. When he hears his defect from someone, he rejoices at that and has faith in the astuteness and intelligence of that person, just as a person

who hears of the defects of his enemy rejoices at that. However, this is rare. Indeed, should a person strive his entire life to hold an equal opinion of both his praiser and his detractor, it would still be difficult to be able to achieve that.

Know that the dangerous aspect of this is in that when a division appears between praising and reproaching, the desire for praise becomes strong in the heart and stratagems are devised for that. It may be that one begin to worship for show, and if one can achieve something through sin, one sins. The fact that the Messenger (S) said: "Woe unto the faster! Woe unto the performer of formal prayer! Let this be said: so long as its root is not pulled out of the soul, one quickly falls into sinning."

However, disliking censure and liking true praise about oneself is not forbidden, so long as it does not lead to corruption, but it is very rare that it does not do so. Most of the people's sins come from praise and criticism. All of people's concern has come from doing everything for public opinion. When this dominates, it leads to unseemly acts, but if not, holding to the hearts of the people and paying attention to that—if it be not in the way of hypocrisy—is not forbidden.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE TREATMENT OF HYPOCRISY IN ACTS OF DEVOTION AND WORSHIP

Know that hypocrisy in acts of devotion to God Most High is among the major sins and close to ascribing partners to God. There is no illness in the souls of the devout more common than this. For, when they perform an act of worship they desire that people learn of it and, in short, believe in their devoutness. When the object of an act of worship is the confidence of people, it is not itself worship. It is the worship of people, and that is ascribing partners to God and making another a partner of God Most High in one's own worship.

God Most High says thus: *For whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do good deeds and make none a partner in the worship of his Lord, the One.* (Q. 18:110) Say to whoever hopes to see God Most High: do not ascribe partners to God in (thy) worship. And God Most High says: *So woe unto those performing the formal prayers who are heedless of their prayer, who would be seen (at worship) yet refuse small kindnesses!* (Q. 107:4-7) Woe unto those who perform their formal prayer inattentively and hypocritically.

Someone asked the Messenger (S): In what does salvation lie?" He replied: "In that thou keep thy devotion to God Most High and do not dissimulate with the people." And he (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, a person will be brought out and asked: 'What act of devotion dost thou have?' He will answer: 'I sacrificed my life in the way of God Most High and was slain in a battle in defense of Islam.' God Most High will say: 'Thou liest! Thou didst that so it would be said that such-and-such a man is manly.' He will say: 'Take him to hell!' Another will be brought out and he will be asked: 'What act of devotion dost thou have?' He will say: 'All that I had I gave away in charity.' God Most High will say: 'Thou liest! Thou didst that so that it would be said that such-and-such a man is generous. Seize him and carry him off to hell.' Another will be brought out and asked: 'What act of devotion dost thou have?' He will say: 'I learned knowledge and the Quran and suffered great deprivation and I taught the people.' He will say: 'Thou liest! Thou didst learn so that the people would say such-and-such a man is learned. Seize him and carry him off to hell!'"

And the Messenger (S) said: "I fear nothing for my people as much as the greatest ascription of partners." They asked: "What is that, O Messenger of God?" He replied: "That is hypocrisy." [And he (S) said:] "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High shall say: 'O hypocrites! Go to those persons whom ye worshipped and seek your reward from them!'"

And he (S) said: "Seek refuge with God Most High from the Cave of Sorrow."[1284] They asked: "O Messenger of God, what is the Cave of Sorrow?" He replied: "A valley in hell, made for reciters of the Quran[1285] and the hypocrites." And he (S) said: "God Most High says: 'Whoever has performed an act of worship and made another a partner with Me—I Who am without need for a partner or companion—I have presented to that companion.'" Mu'adh (R) was weeping. 'Umar (R) asked: "Why art thou weeping?" He replied: "I heard the Messenger (S) say: 'A little bit of hypocrisy is the (same as) the ascription of partners with God.'"

And he (S) said: "The hypocrite shall be called and summoned on the Day of Resurrection: 'O hypocrite! O wicked one! O traitor! Thy deeds have been wasted and thy reward canceled; go and seek thy wages from that person for whom thou didst work!"

Shaddad bin Uways[1286] (R) said: "I saw the Messenger (S) weeping. I asked him why he was weeping. He answered: 'I fear that my people ascribe partners to God—not that they worship idols, or worship the moon or the sun—but that they perform acts of worship in hypocrisy and dissimulation.'"

And he (S) said: "In the shadow of the Throne on the day when there will be no shade except the shadow of the Throne, there will be none other than the man who gives charity with his right hand and hides it from the left hand."[1287]

And he (S) said: "When God Most High created the earth it trembled. He created the mountains to settle it. The angels said: 'Thou hast not created anything stronger than the mountains.' Then, God Most High created iron to cut through the mountains. They said: 'Iron is stronger.' God Most High created fire to melt iron. They said: 'Fire is stronger.' Then, He commanded the water to extinguish the fire. Then, He commanded the wind to raise the water from its place. Then, the angels fell into dispute and they said: 'Let us ask God Most High: 'What is the strongest thing Thou hast created, than which there is nothing stronger?' He said: 'The man who gives charity with his right hand so that his left hand has no knowledge of that. I have created no creature stronger than he.'"

[1284] "Cave of Sorrow": *Jubb al-Huzn*.

[1285] "reciters of the Quran" (*qurrā'ān*): See Note 316.

[1286] Shaddād bin Uways: He was a Helper from the (Jewish) tribe of Khazraj. A scholar and noted for his piety, he was appointed governor of Hims in Syria by 'Umar bin Khattab . Retiring after the murder of 'Uthman, he died in Jerusalem AH57/677CE.

[1287] With respect to this and the following tradition, see the words ascribed to Jesus (A) in Matthew 6:3-4: "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what the right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly."

Mu'adh (R) says that Messenger (S) said: "God, may He be honored and glorified, created seven angels before creating the heavens. Then, he created the heavens and appointed each one of them to a heaven and made each the gatekeeper of that heaven. When the angels of the earth who record the deeds of mankind—they are called the Rememberers[1288]—transmit the deeds performed by each one of (God's) servants from morning to evening to the first heaven and greatly praise his acts of devotion, how much worship he has performed the light of which is like the light of the sun, that angel who is appointed at the gate of the heaven of the world says: 'Throw this devotion back in his face, for I am the watchman of the backbiters. God Most High has commanded me not to allow the deeds of anyone who backbites to pass.' Another deed, of one who has not spoken ill of others, is brought up and reaches the second heaven. That angel says: 'Throw this back in his face, for he did it for the world and to lord it over people in the public assemblies. I have been commanded to prevent (the entry) of any deeds performed for the world and for self-glorification.' Then another deed is brought up in which there is charity, fasting, and formal prayer. And the Rememberers remained in astonishment at its luminosity. When it comes to the third heaven, that angel says: 'I am appointed over pride and I interdict the deeds of the proud. He behaved arrogantly with the people.' Then, another deed is brought up, passing to the fourth heaven. That angel says: 'I am appointed over conceit. His deed is not free of vanity. I shall not permit his deed to pass by me.'

"Then, the deed of another is brought up to the fifth heaven, and the beauty of that deed is as a bride who will submit to her husband. That angel says: 'Take this deed and throw it back in his face and place it upon his neck, for I am appointed over envy, and he would envy anyone whose accomplishment and knowledge had reached his level.' Then, another deed is brought up and was not stopped until it reached the sixth heaven. That angel says: 'Throw this deed back into his face, for he showed no mercy upon anyone who had been afflicted or made sorrowful. Rather, he would rejoice! I am the angel of mercy. I have been commanded to stop the deeds of the unmerciful.' Then another deed is brought up. Its light is as brilliant as the sun. Its noise falls upon the heavens like a peal of thunder—so great it is!—no angel would be able to stop it! When it reaches the seventh heaven, the angel who is the guardian of the seventh heaven says: 'Throw this deed back into his face and put a lock upon his soul, for he did not seek God Most High with this deed. Rather, his purpose was glory among the learned and fame in the

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[1288] "Rememberers" (*hafaẓah*): An Arabic plural of *ḥāfiẓ* meaning "keeper, preserver, rememberer, guard, custodian." A person who has memorized the entire Quran is also called a *ḥāfiẓ*.

cities. All that is like that is hypocrisy. God Most High does not accept the hypocrite.

"Then, another deed is brought up and is passes through to the seventh heaven. In it, there is good nature, remembrance, glorification (of God), and many kinds of acts of worship. All of the angels of the heavens go with that act of worship to the Presence of God Most High and all testify that the deed is pure and sincere. God Most High says: 'Ye are the guardians of his knowledge and deeds, and I am the Guardian of his soul. He did not do this deed for My sake. There was another intention in his heart. My curse upon him, I Who am God!' The angels say: 'Thy curse and ours, too.' And the heavens and all who are in them say: 'May he be accursed.'"

There are many other Traditions about hypocrisy like these.

As for the Non-Prophetic Traditions, 'Umar (R) saw a man with his head bowed; that is, "I am a pious man." ('Umar) said: "O lord of the crooked neck! Straighten thy neck, for humility is in the soul, not in the neck." Abu Imamah[1289] (R) saw someone weeping in the mosque while he was in the position of prostration. (Abu Imamah) said: "If thou wouldst have done at home that which thou art doing in the mosque, who would have come to thee?" 'Ali (R) says: "A hypocrite has three signs: when alone he is lazy, but when he sees people, he becomes energetic; when he is praised, he increases his work; and when he is rebuked, he does less."

Someone said to Sa'id Musayyab (R): "A person gives wealth for the sake of God Most High's reward and for the praise of mankind. What dost thou say?" He said: "Dost thou wish that God Most High take him as His enemy?" (The other) said: "No." (Sa'id) said: "When he does something it must not be for other than God Most High." 'Umar (R) struck someone with his scourge. He said: "Come, retaliate against me and hit me." (The other) said: "I forgive (the blow), for thee and for God." ('Umar) said: "That will not do! Either forgive me so that I know what is due, or forgive it to God alone without partnership." He said: "I have forgiven it to God without partnership."

Fudayl 'Iyad says: "There was a time when they dissimulated in what they did and now they dissimulate in what they have not done." Qatadah (R) says that when a servant (of God) dissimulates, God Most High says to the angels: "Look how that (My) servant mocks Me!"

Disclosing the Acts By Which They Dissimulate

Know that the true nature of hypocrisy is that one display himself to people as pious in order to embellish himself for them, and to

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[1289] Abu Imamah: See Note 1211.

gain acceptance in their hearts so that they will respect, accept, revere, and admire him. This is by means of displaying and showing to them those things that are the evidence of asceticism and greatness in religion. These are of five kinds:

THE FIRST KIND is physical appearance, such as making the face yellowish so that it is supposed that he has not slept that night, or keeping oneself thin as though he were engaged in great spiritual exercises, or having a gloomy visage so that it be thought that he has become thus from anxiety about religion, or uncombed hair so that it be thought that he does not have time to remember himself, or by speaking slowly and not raising his voice so that it be supposed that that is the humility of religion in his soul, or he has dry lips so that it be thought that he is keeping the fast. When this is a cause of people's opinion (of him), there is a quenching and delight in this exhibition for his ego. It is for this reason that Jesus (A) said: "When a person is fasting, he must comb his hair and rub oil in it and moisten his lips with oil and put collyrium around his eyes so that no one know that he is fasting."

THE SECOND KIND is hypocrisy in dress, as when one wears woolen, coarse, short, dirty, and ragged garments so that it will be thought that he is an ascetic. Or, (he goes about with) blue clothes, a prayer rug, and the tatters of the Sufis, so that it will be supposed that he is a Sufi, even though he has none of the spirituality of a Sufi. Or, he covers his turban with a cloth and wears leather slippers so that it be thought that he is very careful about obligatory purity, while he is not. Or, he wears the long robe (of the scholars) and a shawl so that it be thought that he is a learned person, while he is not.

The hypocrites in dress are of two kinds: One group seeks acceptance among the common folk. They always seek and wear old and torn clothing. If someone importunes and obliges them to wear a garment of fine linen or fur, or something which is lawful, it is harder on him than the agony of death, because then people would say that he had turned back from asceticism.

Others seek acceptance both among the common folk and also among rulers and lords. If they wear old clothing, they would be held in contempt by the rulers; if they dress up, they would be held in contempt by the common folk. Therefore, they try to get hold of nicely decorated wrappers[1290] and garments of fine wool, clothing of the color that the righteous wear, so that the common people will not notice it, but the value of the clothing will be that of the garments of the rich and powerful

[1290] "wrappers" (*fūṭah-hā*): large rectangles of cloth wrapped about the body. They can be used as garments; smaller sizes are used for modesty in the public baths.

so that rulers will not look upon them with contempt. If thou tellest one of these folk to put on clothing of fur or linen, even though its cost is less than his wrapper, it will be more difficult for him than the tearing out of his soul.

That fool, since he looks continually at himself, cannot don those garments which are lawful and which the pious have had. He does not even know this much: that by doing this, he worships the people! Moreover, it may be that he realizes this—but does not care.

THE THIRD KIND of hypocrisy is in speech. One moves his lips so that it be thought that he never rests from remembering (God). He may be remembering (God); but if he should want to do so without moving his lips, he would be unable. For, he fears that then the people would not know that he is reciting remembrances (of God). Though he chastises (others for religious offenses) in public, in private he commits the like (offenses). Or, he memorizes the incoherences and jargon of the Sufis so that it would be thought that he knows well the lore of Sufism. Or, he drops his head and jerks it about so that it be thought that he is experiencing ecstasy. Or, he learns some Traditions and stories and relates them so that it is said that he is very learned and has visited many saints and made many journeys.

THE FOURTH KIND of hypocrisy is in devotion: as when someone comes from afar, he performs the formal prayer scrupulously lowering his head. He lengthens his bows and prostrations and does not look about. He gives more charity in public, and other such acts. When he walks, he walks with his head down. However, if he is alone, he walks rapidly and looks in all directions, but—when he espies someone in the distance—he resumes walking slowly.

THE FIFTH KIND is that he displays that he has many disciples and many students, that lords and princes come to greet him and give him presents; that great shakyhs hold in respect and notice him. It may happen that these things have been disclosed by his own tongue, or that he disputes with someone saying: "Who art thou and who art thy disciples and who was thy spiritual guide? I have visited many spiritual guides and spent so many years in the service of so-and-so. Which of the spiritual guides hast thou visited and which of them didst thou serve?" and so forth. For reason of this, he burdens himself with many sorrows.

With respect to spiritual delight,[1291] hypocrisy in all of those (pains) is easy, for there is the monk who himself may bring a single

[1291] "spiritual delight": *shurb.*

bean for himself as food, with the spiritual pleasure that people know of that and speak his praises. All of what we have recounted is forbidden if it is in worship and for the appearance of being an ascetic; for asceticism must be for the sake of God Most High.

However, if one seeks acceptance and rank with something that is not an act of worship, it is permitted. Indeed, anyone who comes out of his house wears better and more decorated clothing. That is permitted. Indeed, it is Practice (of the Prophet). In this fashion, he is displaying his good looks and courtesy, not his asceticism. On the contrary, if a person displays his worth in the knowledge of language, grammar, mathematics, medicine, or something other than the knowledge of religion that is reserved for devotions, pretense is permitted; for it is a pretense in the quest for rank. We have stated that when the quest for rank and honor is not excessive, it is permitted, but not in acts of devotion or worship.

One day the Messenger (S) felt a desire to gather the Companions. He gazed into a cask of water and straightened his turban and hair. 'Ayishah (R) said: O Messenger of God, dost thou do thus?" He said: "Yes, God Most High likes of His servant that when he wishes to see his brethren, he look good for them and set himself in order." However much one sets oneself in order, it is an act of the Messenger (S) and also a principle of religion, for he had been charged with setting himself aright in their hearts and eyes so that they would increase their inclination towards him and follow him. So, if a person adorns himself too, it is permissible, for it is a Practice (of the Prophet).

One of the benefits of this is that when one keeps himself in disarray and does not observe courtesy, he will be talked about behind his back and he will become repugnant to others. This may the reason for that.[1292]

However, when hypocrisy is in religion, it is forbidden for two reasons: One is that one has practiced deception by pretending to people that he is sincere in worship, but when his soul looks at people it is not sincere. If the people knew that which he is doing is for them, they would hold him as an enemy and not accept him.

The other is that when one performs formal prayer, fasts, and performs the worship of God Most High for the sake of another, he is mocking (God), and he has made a helpless, weak servant his object of desire, when the object should be God Most High. He is like the person who stands before a king in the appearance of service, but his private purpose is that he look at a young male slave or a maidservant while pretending to the king that he stands in his service—yet his purpose is

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[1292] That is, in the manner of those who seek to repel the world by appearing blameworthy, as discussed in the previous chapter.

something else. This is a kind of contempt that he has shown the king, that another is more important for his service than his sovereign is.

In the same way, whoever performs his formal prayers hypocritically is in reality bowing and prostrating himself for others. If the aim of the prostration was to honor a person, the ascription of partnership to God is obvious. But, the hypocrisy (of a man) honoring a person in a manner so that his acceptance by the other has become the object—so that while he prostrates himself to God Most High, he obtains the acceptance of the other by these means—is the covert, not overt, ascription of partners to God.[1293]

DISCLOSING THE DEGREES OF HYPOCRISY

Know that there are different degrees of hypocrisy and some are greater than others. The distinction arise from three principles:

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE is that the purpose of the hypocrisy is without any desire to gain spiritual reward, such as when one performs formal prayer or fasts, but if one is alone, he does not. This is very serious and its punishment is great. However, if there is also the object of obtaining spiritual reward (from these acts of worship, but if he is alone, he does not perform them, this too is closer to the first degree. His weak purpose (for spiritual reward) will not exclude one from the wrath of God Most High.

If the desire for spiritual reward does not predominate and if, when one is alone, he performs (the acts of worship), but his pleasure increases when someone else sees it and this makes it easier for him, it is my hope that his worship be not nullified by this and that the spiritual reward not be lost. However, he will be punished according to the amount of the pleasure of the hypocrisy, or his spiritual reward decreased by that amount. However, if both purposes are equal, so that one does not exceed the other, it is ascribing partnership to God and the literal meaning of the Traditions is that he will not leap out of that safely and equally, rather, he will be punished.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE IS the difference between that which is done hypocritically and that is done as devotion. In this, there are three degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is hypocrisy with regard to the basic tenets of faith. This is the belief of the hypocrite and his affair will be more

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[1293] That is, if a person were to prostrate himself before a person, this would be obvious ascription of a partner or partners to God; but if he performs his bows and prostrations outwardly for God but inwardly for the good opinion of a person, then the hypocrisy is a covert or an indirect ascription of partners to God, rather than a overt or direct ascription.

difficult than that of the unbeliever, for in his heart he is an unbeliever too, while in appearance he is deceptive. There were many such at the beginning of Islam, but now they are fewer. However, the Libertines, who have become atheists and hold no belief in the Religious Law and the Hereafter and who display their disagreement openly, are among the hypocrites who will remain in hell for all eternity.

THE SECOND DEGREE is hypocrisy with regard to tenets of worship, such as the person who performs the formal prayers without obligatory purification—*God forbid!*—or who fasts, but when alone does not keep it. This too is a great (matter), but not as great as hypocrisy with regard to the basic tenets of faith. However, since he prefers a position close to people more than that close to God Most High, his faith is weak. Even though he is not an unbeliever, yet he is in danger of unbelief at the time of death, should he not repent.

THE THIRD DEGREE is one who is not hypocritical with regard to the basic tenets of faith and religious obligations, but is with regard to the Practices of the Prophet as when he performs the (voluntary) night formal prayers, gives alms, attends congregations, fasts on the Day of 'Arafah and on 'Ashura, Mondays, Thursdays, and the excellent days of fasting,[1294] so that he not be reproached and so that he may be praised. Perhaps he says: "I think that I have not performed them, as they were not incumbent upon me, and now that I do not expect any spiritual reward for them there must not be any punishment either."[1295] That is not how it is, for these acts of worship belong to God Most High and there is no portion of them for man. If they are done for mankind, mankind has been given precedence over God Most High in something which is for none other than God, may he be honored and glorified.

This is mockery and a cause of punishment, even though there will not be the harshness that would be (in the case of hypocrisy with respect to) the religious obligations. It would be close to that hypocrisy with respect to the Practices that are of the character of acts of worship, as when he sees a person he performs the bows and prostrations (of formal prayer) more scrupulously, without paying attention to anything, and prolonging the recitation of the Quran. He seeks out a congregation

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[1294] "the excellent days (of fasting)" (*ayyām-i fāḍil*): six days in Shawwāl, the month following Ramaḍān, excluding the three days of the Festival at the beginning of Shawwal during which one should not fast. All of the pious acts in this list are Practices of the Prophet (*sunnat*), not religious obligations commanded by God (*farīḍah*). AA omits this item from his text.

[1295] That is, he has observed these Practices of the Prophet for the purpose of impressing people and he hopes to escape the punishment for that hypocrisy by declaring that it would be as though he had not done them. He never expected any spiritual reward, so he does not expect any punishment either. But Ghazzali refutes this argument in the rest of the paragraph.

and he does not do it (when) alone. He takes a place in the front row[1296] and gives of that which is better for the poor tax. He guards his tongue during the fast and sits privately.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE is the difference in the objective of the hypocrite, for there must, of course, be a motive for his hypocrisy. This is of three degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is that his objective be some rank, so that from that he can reach some corruption or sin, as when he makes a show of trustworthiness, piety, and caution with regard to the doubtful things in wealth and property so that he may be given the supervision of the charitable religious foundations, judgeship, inheritances, custody, deposits in trust, and the property of orphans. This so that he may do some treachery with them, or that he may be given some money to be distributed as poor tax and alms and to be delivered to the deserving, or that he spend money on the poor on the journey of the Pilgrimage, or that he spend it for the Sufi hospices, or spend it for the construction of mosques and inns (so that he will be able to misuse these funds). He holds assemblies and exhibits his piety while his eye falls on some woman whom he hopes will desire him so that she will sit with him in corruption, or he attends assemblies with the intention of looking at a woman or a lad. These and their like are the worst of objectives by which he makes the worship of God Most High a highway to achieve his sin. It is as though when someone casts some suspicion on his property or wife, he gives money in alms and displays probity until that suspicion passes, until it is said: "How could a person who gives of his own wealth consider the wealth of others lawful?"[1297]

THE SECOND DEGREE is that his motive be a permitted thing, such as a preacher[1298] who pretends to be an ascetic so that he be given something, or that he marry a woman whom he desires. This, too, is disliked by God Most High, even if his condition is not so critical as that of the preceding case. This one, too, has made devotion to God Most High a way to achieve the goods of the world, while devotion is the path to proximity to the Divine Presence and obtaining the happiness of the Hereafter. When he has made it the way of the world, his betrayal is immense.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that instead of going after something, he avoids something so that he will not be regarded with disrespect: he would be viewed as the pious and righteous are. Just as when he is walking and he sees someone in the distance, he walks slowly with his head bowed and begins to walk in the manner of a shaykh, lest it be said

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[1296] "the front row" of those performing formal prayer in a congregation.

[1297] That is: "How could he prey upon the property of others?"

[1298] "a preacher" (*mudhakkir*): literally, "one who leads the remembrance (of God)."

that he is one of the negligent and so that it be thought that even on the road, he is doing the work of religion. If he wants to laugh, he suppresses it so that it not be said that he has become frivolous; or, that he does not joke for fear that it be said he is being sarcastic; or, that he sighs and then says: "*I ask the forgiveness of God!*" and he says: "*Glory be to God!*" for this human lapse: "What room for a lapse is there for us when that is before us?" God Most High knows from his heart that had he been alone, he would not have asked for divine forgiveness, nor would he have expressed those regrets.

Or, someone slanders another in his presence, and he says: "People have more important work than that. It would be preferable if they busied themselves with their own backbiting and defects," so that it not be said that he backbites. Or, he sees some people who are performing voluntary night formal night prayers or the night prayer, or fasting on Thursdays and Mondays. (He thinks) that if he does not do these things, he will considered lazy. He joins them out of the fear of that. Or, he does not fast on the Day of 'Arafah or 'Ashura, but does not drink water so that he will appear thirsty so that it be thought that he is keeping the fast. Or, (when) someone says: "Eat this food," he replies: "Excuse me," that is, (to imply:) "I am fasting," when he is not. In this, two pollutions are combined: one is the hypocrisy in that he is not fasting, and the other is that he is signaling: "I am not saying explicitly that I am fasting and I am concealing my worship and I always saying 'excuse me,' but I do not say I am fasting.'" He also desires to show himself sincere. It may be that he drink water and become impatient to begin making excuses: "I was ill last night. I was not able to fast today," or: "So-and-so made me break my fast." Or, he may not say it immediately because they would know it is hypocrisy. He waits a time, then, he brings up a subject from another quarter and says: "The hearts of mothers are very weak and they think that if a child fasts it will die." That is: "I am not fasting because of my mother's heart." Or, he says: "When people fast, they go to sleep early and cannot spend the night in prayer." Satan begins to cause these things like it to flow from his tongue. When the filth of hypocrisy is internal, the wretched reciter is unaware of it, for he does not know that he is tearing out his own roots and bringing his own worship to perdition.

This is what is itself easy, for there are some forms of hypocrisy that are more hidden than the sound of the footsteps of an ant. The perspicacious and the learned are unable to discern them, so what can be expected of foolish worshippers?

Disclosing the Hypocrisy That Is More Hidden Than the Footsteps of an Ant

Know that some forms of hypocrisy are obvious, such as the person who performs the night formal prayer among people, but not when he is alone. This is obvious. More hidden than this is that one have the custom of performing formal prayer every night, but when someone else is present, he becomes more energetic and more lively. This, too, is obvious and not like the creeping of the ant, for it may be recognized. Rather, it may also be more concealed than this, as when he does not increase in energy and not become more lively and is as he is every night when performing formal prayer. No sign is immediately apparent. It is kept concealed in the midst of the soul as fire in iron, but its effect will become evident at that time when people learn that he has this quality and he is pleased and finds an expansiveness in himself (because of that). This joy and expansiveness is the sign that hypocrisy is concealed in his heart. If he does not counter this delight with repugnance, it is to be feared that this hidden vein will assault his self and not demand concealment, so that it manufactures a reason for people to become aware (of his state). If he does not declare it explicitly, he will hint at it. If he does not hint, he will exhibit it by means of his features. He will show himself downcast and tired, so that it be thought that he was awake all night.

It may be more deeply hidden than this also. It may be so that he does not delight in the peoples' knowledge about him and his zeal does not increase in their presence, yet his heart is not devoid of hypocrisy. The sign of this is that when a person comes to him and does not salute (him) with "*peace*" first, he finds some astonishment within himself. If a person decreases his respect for him, or does not hasten to fulfill his needs, or shows no leniency in his buying and selling with him, he finds amazement in his heart and objects, for if that worship had not been hidden, there would not have been this amazement. One would say that his certainty about this concealed worship demands respect and, in short, the non-existence of that worship or its existence was not the same to him. His soul is not yet devoid of hidden hypocrisy. If one gives a person a thousand dinars to get something from him which is worth a hundred thousand dinars, one does not put the other under an obligation with this and one does not expect any respect; doing so or not doing so is the equal in his eyes with respect to people. When one performs an act of worship for God Most High in order to attain eternal happiness, why should one expect respect? Thus, the most hidden hypocrisy is that.

'Ali (R) says that on the Day of Resurrection it will be said to the reciters of the Quran:[1299] "Did they not sell you goods more cheaply? Did they not attend to your needs? Did they not salute you first?" That is, all of these are the rewards of your work which ye accepted but did not keep pure. One of those who had fled from mankind was engaged in worship, saying: "We have fled from temptation, but it is feared that temptation may enter our religious acts, for when we see someone, we want him to show respect and observe what is due."

It is for this reason that the sincere devotees have tried to hide their worship in the manner that vile acts and sins are hidden. For, they have recognized that nothing will be accepted at the Resurrection other than pure (acts of worship untainted with hypocrisy). They are like the person who desires to go on Pilgrimage knowing that in the desert nothing is accepted save pure gold and that there is danger to one's life. He obtains pure Moroccan gold and discards all that is counterfeit and retains the pure for the day of need, for on no day will mankind be more wretched than on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever does not secure pure deeds today will remain at a loss on that Day. No one will take his hand so long as he makes the distinction as to whether a beast or a man sees his worship, it is not devoid of hypocrisy. And so long as he considers it different whether a person sees him at worship or eating or sleeping, it is not devoid of hypocrisy.[1300] The Messenger (S) says: "The smallest hypocrisy and the most hidden hypocrisy is the ascription of partners to God." That is, to intrude a partner into the worship of God Most High. since the awareness of God, may He be honored and glorified, (of his worship) was not sufficient, and the awareness of others of his worship affected it.

EXCURSUS: [AT WHAT TIMES JOY AT THE PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF ONE'S WORSHIP IS PERMISSIBLE]

Know that whoever takes joy in that people become aware of his worship is not devoid of hypocrisy except that the joy be justified. (Justifiable joy) is of four types:

THE FIRST is that one rejoices in the thought he had the desire of keeping it secret, but without his desiring it, God Most High disclosed it. God Most High has concealed many of the sins that he has committed. He realizes that it is a favor and grace accompanying him, for He has kept all of his unseemly acts concealed and disclosed all of the good. He rejoices at the grace and favor of God Most High, not at the praise and

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[1299] "reciters of the Quran": See Note 316.

[1300] That is, his worship is not free of hypocrisy so long as he maintains a distinction in his mind between its being witnessed by man or beast, or whether he is seen at worship or at other activities. One should be as natural in one situation as in another.

acceptance of the people, as God Most High said: *Say, it is a favor of God and in His mercy; so let them rejoice.* (Q. 10:58)

THE SECOND is that one rejoices and says: "As He has concealed My unbecoming acts in this world, it is a sign that He will also conceal them in the Hereafter." For, it is related in the Traditions that God Most High is more generous than to conceal a servant's sins in this world and then disgrace him in the next world.

THE THIRD is that one rejoices because he knows that when they have seen (his worship) they will emulate him and they too will achieve eternal happiness, so that both the spiritual reward of the secret will be written for him, as he had intended to keep it hidden, and also the public spiritual reward, because it had been revealed without his willing it.

THE FOURTH is that there is joy because that person who saw it will praise him and have good faith in him. Notwithstanding this praise and belief, he is obedient to God Most High and delights in worshipping Him—not because of the honor given him (by man). The sign of this is that if he learns that that person comes to devotion through (the agency of) another, he is just as happy.

DISCLOSING THE HYPOCRISY WHICH NULLIFIES DEEDS

Know that the hypocritical thought may be at the beginning of the act of worship, at its completion, or in the midst of the act of worship.

That which is at the beginning of the act of worship nullifies that worship because sincerity in the declaration of Intention is a prerequisite. However, if the dissimulation is not with respect to a requirement (for the validity) of the act of worship, such as when one embarks upon the obligatory formal prayer at the onset of its time out of hypocrisy,[1301] yet if one were alone, one would not commit any fault in the requirements of formal prayer, the spiritual reward for praying at the onset (of the period) would be voided, but the prayer itself would be correct because his intention for the prayer itself, for reason of religiosity, is pure. Just as when a person performs formal prayer in a building taken by force, he will have fulfilled the religious duty (of prayer), even though he is a rebel (against God),[1302] but he is not sinning with respect to the requirements of the prayer. Here, too, there is no hypocrisy in the prayer (itself) and it is timely.

[1301] The hypocrisy here is in displaying eagerness to others in the performance of the prayer at the onset of its time period, that is, directly after the call to that particular obligatory formal prayer.

[1302] "rebel (against God)" *ʿāṣi*: sinner: he has sinned by being implicated in the usurpation of someone else's property.

However, if he performs the formal prayer with total sincerity, then the thought of hypocrisy strikes and is apparent, the formal prayer is not nullified, but for this purpose, he may be punished.

It is related than someone said: "I recited *Al-Baqarah*[1303] last night." Ibn Mas'ud (R) said: "That was his portion of the act of worship." That is, that disclosure that he had made. Someone said to the Messenger (S): "I am continually fasting." He said: "Thou art neither fasting nor not fasting." It has been said that the meaning of that is that since he announced it, (the fasting) was nullified. It appears, in our opinion, that the Messenger (S) and Ibn Mas'ud (R) were saying that by these disclosures they knew that acts of worship were not devoid of hypocrisy when they were being performed. But, if they were not tainted, it is remote that an act of worship, which was performed correctly and completed, be nullified after the fact. Also, it has been said about the meaning of the Tradition, that he said this because continuous fasting has been prohibited.

As to that hypocrisy which occurs during the performance of a formal prayer, if it dominates the act of worship, it nullifies the prayer, as when an onlooker arrives or one remembers something that he has lost. If there were not people present, he would have stopped his prayer, but he finished the prayer out of shame: such a prayer is invalid because the intention of the prayer has been put to flight and this standing (in formal prayer) is for the sake of people. However, if the prerequisite of the intention remains in place but some extra zeal has appeared because of the people's watching, and he begins to perform the prayer more scrupulously, the correct view in our opinion is that the formal prayer is not invalidated, even though with this hypocrisy he is a rebel (against God).

However, if someone witnesses his worship and he is pleased by that, Harith Muhasibi[1304] says: "There is a difference of opinion as to whether his prayer is invalidated or not." He says: "I was undecided about this, but now the suspicion dominates that it is nullified." Then, he said: "If a person says that a man asked the Messenger (S): 'I conceal my deeds, but when they are found out I become pleased.' The Messenger (S) said: 'Thou hast gained two rewards: one the reward of the secrecy and the other the reward of the publicity.' The answer to that is that this Tradition is "transmitted"[1305] and the chain of narrators is incomplete." Then he said: "Is the meaning of this that after the completion (of the act of worship), it becomes known and he is gladdened, or is the meaning

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[1303] "*Al-Baqarah*" (The Cow), the second and the longest chapter of the Quran.

[1304] Harith Muhasibi: See Note 832.

[1305] "transmitted" (*mursal*): A Tradition which goes back only to the second generation (the Followers) after the Prophet. The name of the Companion who would be the link is not given. This weakens the authenticity of the Tradition in the eyes of Muslim scholars.

that he is happy by the grace of God, may He be honored and glorified, at the disclosure of the his act of devotion—as we have discussed above—by reason of the fact that no one says being delighted at the public knowledge of his act of worship would be the cause of an increase in his reward for that act, even if it was not the cause of a sin." These are the words of Harith Muhasibi. The most apparent, in our opinion, is that being gladdened to that extent, when nothing is added to the act (of worship), the requirements of the intention remain in place, and the act is in accordance with the intention, then, the formal prayer does not become invalidated. *And God knows best what is correct.*

Disclosing the Treatment of the Soul Sick With Hypocrisy

Know that this is a great sickness and it is very dangerous. Its treatment is necessary, and it will not be amenable to treatment except with total earnestness. For, it is an illness mingled with the temperament of the human soul and firmly established in it; it responds to treatment with difficulty. The reason for the severity of this illness is that from childhood, a person sees in mankind that they regard each other with hypocrisy and dissimulation and that they embellish themselves in the eyes of others, and that this is all of their activity, or (at least) most of it. This nature starts to grow in the soul of the child and increases day by day, so by that time he has achieved full reason and knows that it is harmful, this habit may have mastered him and its treatment become difficult. It requires a long time and no one is devoid of this illness. This earnest effort is every person's individual religious duty. In this treatment, there are two states:

ONE (STATE) IS THE SEEKING for a purgative that will purge its roots from within. This purgative is a compound of theory and practice.

AS FOR THE THEORETICAL, it is that one recognizes the need. For a person does that which he does because there is an immediate pleasure for him. When he knows that its resulting harm will be of such a degree that he will not have strength to bear it, giving it up will be easy for him, just as if he knows that there is a fatal poison in some honey, he would avoid it even though he may crave it.

The source of hypocrisy, though it all comes from the love of rank and dignity, nevertheless has three roots: one is the love for praise and eulogy, another is the fear of censure and reproach, and the third is the envy of others. It was for this reason that a desert Arab asked the Messenger (S): "What dost thou say about the man who fights in defense of Islam for the sake of honor, or for the sake of displaying his manliness, or so that he will be talked about?" The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever strives for that so that word of (God's) Unity may become triumphant is on the path of God, may He be honored and glorified." All

of this refers to the quest for remembrance and praise and the fear of reproach.

And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever fights in defense of Islam so as to obtain a camel's hobbling cord receives nothing from the battle except that for which he has declared an Intention." Therefore, the result of dissimulation comes from these three roots. The appetite for the people's praise must be shattered by his visualizing and contemplating his own disgrace at the Resurrection: a herald will cry publicly, saying: "O hypocrite!" or: "O sinner!" or: "Lost One! Hadst thou no shame that thou didst sell devotion to God Most High for the prattle of people? Thou didst hold to the hearts of the created and did not fear the pleasure of the Creator. Thou hast chosen distance from God Most High so that thou might become closer to people. Thou hast preferred the acceptance of mankind to the acceptance of God. Thou hast consented to contempt for the Creator in order to obtain the praise of people. There is none more despicable to God Most High, for thou hast sought the pleasure of all and hadst no care for His pleasure, and thou hast chosen His anger."

When a reasonable person reflects upon this ignominy, he knows that the praise of the people is not established with this, especially since so many of his acts of devotion—which would be the cause of preponderance of the scale-pan of his good deeds—would be, since they were defiled by hypocrisy, the cause of the preponderance of the scale-pan of his evil deeds. If he had not committed these hypocrisies, he would have been the companion of the prophets and the saints. Now, he has fallen into the hands of the guardians of hell and become the companion of the forsaken. He has done all of this to please the people, but their pleasure will never be obtained. As soon as one is pleased, another becomes displeased. If one offers praise, another offers reproaches. And even if they all utter praises, what has one gained from them? They do not have his sustenance in their hands, nor do they have his life, nor his happiness in this world, or the next. It is absolute ignorance to put one's soul in a state of anxiety and to throw it into the danger of punishment and loathing (by God) for such a motive! One must keep this (thought) and its like fresh in one's soul.

One should examine and treat greed with that which we have discussed in the section about the love of wealth in this Pillar.[1306] One should consider that this craving is not faithful and if it is, it will be with degradation and obligation, and the pleasure of God Most High will be lost immediately, while the hearts of the people themselves will not be subjugated except by the will of God Most High. When the pleasure of God Most High is obtained, He will Himself subjugate their hearts to

[1306] Chapter Six of this Pillar.

him. If he does not (secure the pleasure of God), his disgrace will become public and souls will also fly from him.

As for the fear of the people's aspersions, it may be cured by one's saying to oneself: "If he is praised by God Most High, the reproach of the people holds no injury for him. And if he is reproached (by God), then the praise of mankind holds no benefit. If he takes the path of sincerity and cleanses his soul from anxiety about (the opinions) of people, God Most High will adorn all souls with love for him. If he does not (cleanse his soul), it will happen quickly that his hypocrisy and dissimulation will be recognized and that the disgrace which he continually fears will fall upon him, while the pleasure of God Most High will have been lost. When he summons his soul and it becomes of one aim and one thought in sincerity, it will obtain freedom from the consideration of the opinion of mankind. The (divine) lights will attach themselves to his soul, the favors and succor of (His) solicitude will become uninterrupted, and the pathway of sincerity and its pleasure will be opened before him.

AS FOR THE PRACTICAL TREATMENT, it is that one keep hidden his good deeds and acts of devotion as he keeps hidden his vile deeds and sins until he accustoms himself to being content with devotion and God Most High's knowledge (of his acts). At the beginning, this is difficult, but if one makes the effort, it will become easy for him and he will obtain the pleasure of sincerity and conversation (with God). He will become so that should people become aware (of his deeds), he would pay no attention to them.

THE SECOND STATE is quieting the thoughts of hypocrisy. When the hypocritical thought appears, even if one struggles earnestly against it so that one cuts off the greed for the property of others and their praises, and all have become contemptible in one's eyes, yet Satan will start to bring hypocritical thoughts to mind in the midst of worship.

[HYPOCRITICAL THOUGHTS:] First, the thought that one knows some person has learned (of his devotion), or the hope that it will be learned. Second, a desire that appears in one's self so it may become known so that he have some dignity in their opinion. Third, the acceptance of that desire so that he aims at its realization.

The effort must be made to first fend off the thought and say to oneself: "What is public knowledge to me if the Creator be aware? For me, His knowledge is sufficient. My affair is not in the hands of the people." If the second thought concerning the people's approbation quickens, he recalls that which he has previously determined for himself: "What profit has the approval of mankind in comparison with the rebuff and disapproval of God Most High?" From this thought, a detestation will appear in opposition to that desire. Then, that appetite summons him

to the approval of mankind, while this abhorrence prohibits him. The self will become obedient to that which is more dominant and stronger.

So, there are three other matters concerning the confrontation with these three thoughts: one is the knowledge that one will be under the curse and indignation of God Most High; another is the repugnance born of this knowledge; the third is checking and warding off of hypocritical thoughts.

It may be that the appetite for hypocrisy so crowd within the soul that there is no room left for knowledge and repugnance, and that they become unperceived, even though one has previously spent considerable thought upon this. In that case, Satan has the upper hand. It is as though a person prepare himself with mildness and (then) appoint the blight of anger over himself. When that crowding arrives, anger starts to overwhelm and all is forgotten. It may happen that knowledge is present (in the soul) and he may know that this is dissimulation, but if the appetite be strong, repugnance (at the hypocrisy) may not appear. It may happen that repugnance be present too, but it cannot overcome that appetite (for dissimulation), or ward it off, and one inclines toward popular approval.

And many a scholar utters words, knowing that he is speaking hypocritically and that (this) is to his loss, yet he keeps talking and postponing (his) repentance.

Therefore, repelling hypocrisy is in accordance with the strength of one's repugnance. The strength of one's repugnance is in accordance with the strength of one's knowledge, and the strength of one's knowledge is in accordance with the strength of one's faith. Its aid comes from the angels. However, hypocrisy is in accordance with the strength of one's appetite, and aid for that comes from Satan. The soul of (God's) servant is between these two contending armies. It has a resemblance to each of these, if one resemblance overcomes it, the effect is more acceptable and it inclines more towards it.

This resemblance has been predetermine—the servant (of God) has done that to himself before the formal prayer—as to whether the character of the angels will be more dominant in him or that of the devils. So, if a hypocritical thought occurs in the midst of an act of worship, that nature begins to appear. Behind all of this, a pre-existing destiny drives one to that place whence has come one's portion of the pre-existent determination of the victory of the resemblance to the angels or of the resemblance to the devils.

Excursus: The Way of Eliminating the Promptings of Hypocrisy

When thou hast opposed the importunings of hypocrisy and hast become disgusted by them, if the craving for (hypocrisy) and its promptings (still) remain in the soul, thou wilt not be culpable for that.

For, that (which remains) is (a part of) human nature. Thou hast not been commanded to nullify thine own nature; rather, thou hast been commanded to conquer, overcome and take control of it, so that thou art not thrown into the pit (of hell). When thou hast gained the power for that so that thou do not do what it demands, it is the evidence that it has been conquered and is under control. This is sufficient for the observance with respect to one's obligation. Thy disgust and thine opposition is the atonement for that craving by reason of that which the Companions said to the Messenger (S): "Thoughts occur to us that would be easier if they were thrown upon us from the sky, and we are disgusted by them." The Messenger (S) said: "Truly! Have ye attained that state?" They replied: "Yes." He said: "This is the purity and genuineness of faith and those thoughts were with regard to God Most High." The purity of faith is the revulsion at (the bad thoughts), not (the bad thoughts). Therefore, since repugnance at that is the atonement, it is better that all that is related to the doubts of mankind be effaced by that the repugnance. However, it may be that a person obtain the power to oppose Satan and his (own) self in the insinuation itself. Satan suggests and causes it to seem to him that his interest lies in that he engage in disputation with Satan. The pleasure of conversation (with God) is lost in this suggestion and the soul's occupation with it. This is a mistake, and it is of four degrees:

ONE is that one occupy himself with this disputing. It wastes time.

ANOTHER is that one is brief in this and gives (Satan) the lie, wards him off, and resumes his conversation (with God).

THE THIRD is that one not engage in denial and defense either, for one knows that these too waste time. He pays no attention to (Satan) and carries on with his conversation (with God).

THE FOURTH is that one begin to increase one's effort and craving for sincerity, for he knows that this angers Satan and he will not pay attention to him. This is the most perfect. For, when Satan realizes (the worshipper's sincerity), he loses his desire (to ensnare) him.

The similitude of this is that there be four persons who are seeking knowledge. An envier stands in their way and tries to stop one of them. He does not obey, but makes ready to fight with him and wastes time doing that. Another, whom he stops, wards him off but does not fight with him. And the third does not bother to ward him off. Rather, he pays no heed to him and continues on his way and wastes no time. The fourth pays no attention to him and begins to walk faster. This envier has attained something of his objective from the first two, but nothing from the third. From the fourth, (the envier) has obtained nothing of his objective, but has caused the increase of (the fourth man's) goodness.[1307]

[1307] By causing him to hasten on the road to knowledge.

If (the envier) does not regret all (his failures), he will regret the stopping of the last and say: "I wish that I had not done that!" So, it is preferred that one should not become involved in temptation and its disputes as much as one is able, and quickly return to the conversation (with God).

Disclosing the Permission to Reveal Acts of Devotion

Know that in concealing acts of devotion there is the benefit that one achieves liberation from hypocrisy. There is also a benefit in revealing them and that is the people's following his example and the stimulation of their desire for goodness. It is for this that God Most High praised both of these (practices), saying: *If ye publish your almsgiving, it is well, but if ye hide it and give it to the poor, it will be better for you.* (Q. 2:271) He said: "If ye give alms openly, it is very good; but if ye give secretly, it is better."

Once, the Messenger (S) asked for some money. One of the Helpers brought a purse. When the people saw that, they began bringing money. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever executes a Practice well and others follow his example has his own reward, as well as the reward of those who follow his example." (This is) just like the reward for the person who wishes to go on Pilgrimage or to fight in defense of Islam and makes preparations beforehand and comes out so that people will envy (what he is doing), or the person who engages in formal prayer at night and recites the Quran in a loud voice to awaken others. Therefore, the truth of the matter is that if one is safe from hypocrisy and one's revealing (something) is so that others will follow his example and become eager for this, it is better. But, if the appetite of hypocrisy will be activated, the zeal of others will hold no benefit for him, and so concealment would be better for him. Consequently, anyone who wishes to make public his acts of worship must do so in a place where he knows that his example will be followed, for there is the person whose family will imitate him, while the people of the marketplace and others will not.

Another thing is that one must watch one's soul, as the appetite of hypocrisy commonly lies hidden inside one. On the pretext of others' following his example, he makes (his acts of devotion) public until he is ruined. This weak one is like the person who does not know how to swim and is about to drown. He seizes the hand of another and both perish. The strong one is like the person who is a teacher who swims himself and saves others too. This is the degree of the prophets, the saints, and the truly righteous. A person must not deceive himself and reveal an act of worship that he is able to conceal. The sign of candor in this is that he supposes that if it is said to him: "Keep thy devotion secret so that the people will follow the example of that other devotee. Thy (spiritual) recompense will be the same is if thou hadst revealed thine own acts."

(In that case,) if he finds a desire for revealing his devotion, it shows that he is seeking his own dignity, not the spiritual reward of the Hereafter.

Another approach concerning such (self-)disclosure is that after completing an act of devotion, he says: "What have I done? There is a delight and a spiritual pleasure for the self in this too." It may be that he talks excessively. It is a duty that he hold his tongue and not disclose it until that time when the praise and censure of the public is the equal to him and their approval or rejection of him the same. Then, when he knows that in discussing this, there is a stimulus to others for the desire of goodness, he speaks. Thus, the great ones who were people of strength have said much (about these things):

Sa'd bin Mu'adh [1308] (R) said: "Since becoming a Muslim, I have not performed a formal prayer in which I have spoken to my self except that which will be said to it in the Hereafter and what it will say in reply. I have heard absolutely nothing from the Messenger (S) which I was not certain to be truth." 'Umar (R) said: "I have no concern about whether affairs will be difficult for me or easy when I arise in the morning. What do I know about in which my benefit will lie?" Ibn Mas'ud (R said: "I do not wish for anything different from whatever condition I arise in of a morning." 'Uthman (R) said: "Since swearing fealty to the Messenger (S), I have not touched my genitals with my right hand, I have not sung songs, and I have not told a lie." Abu Sufyan (R) said at the time of death: "Do not weep for me; since becoming a Muslim I have committed no sins." And 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz (R), said: "God Most High has not decided anything for me which I would wish He had not done. No pleasure has remained for me except in that which God Most High has destined (for me)."

All of these were the words of the strong (in faith) and the weak must not be deceived by them. Know that God Most High has designs in affairs that no one can perceive. Under every bad thing there is a good which we cannot comprehend, and in hypocrisy, there is much good for mankind, even though the hypocrite is lost, for there are many things which a person does in dissimulation which others suppose are being done sincerely, and they follow his example.

A story: It is related that in Basrah it was thus at morning, that they would go to every quarter reciting the Quran aloud and listening to the remembrance (of God) so that the desire of others (for faith) would be increased. Then, someone wrote a book about the fine points of

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[1308] Sa'd bin Mu'adh: one of the Companions of the Prophet. He was one of the chiefs of the Jewish Madinan tribe of Aws and became a Muslim at the age of 31. He died at the age of 37 from wounds received during the battle of the Ditch, AH6/627CE. As he lay dying, he was selected by the Jewish tribes of Madinah to pass judgment upon them for joining forces with the enemies of the Muslims in an attempt to expel them from Madinah.

hypocrisy, and all of them stopped (that custom) and the desire for that weakened. Then, it was said: "Would that that person had not written that book! So that the hypocrite would sacrifice himself for others and go to perdition while the others would recite with sincerity."

Disclosing the Permission to Conceal Sins

Know that it may happen that making worship public be hypocrisy, while concealing sins is permissible at all times by reason of seven excuses:

THE FIRST EXCUSE is that God Most High has commanded that ye conceal corruption and sinning. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever is tainted by something lewd should keep the veil of God Most High over it."

THE SECOND EXCUSE is that when it remains concealed in this world, it is glad tidings in that there may be hope that it will also be concealed in the next world.

THE THIRD EXCUSE is that one fears the censure of mankind which will occupy his soul and confuse his worship and distract his soul.

THE FOURTH EXCUSE is that the soul will become distressed by blame and reproach—this is human nature—and their avoidance is not forbidden. Holding reproach and praise equal is the ultimate Unity (of God), and not every one achieves that. However, devotion performed out of fear of reproach is not permissible, for devotion must be with sincerity. Enduring the absence of praise and commendation is easy, but enduring reproaches is difficult.

THE FIFTH EXCUSE is that one fears that he will become the object of attacks and be tormented. The Law has given him permission—though his punishment is also obligatory—to conceal it and repent. After another evil act, shunning is lawful.

THE SIXTH EXCUSE is that one is ashamed in front of people, and shame is praised and a part of faith. Shame is one thing, and hypocrisy another.

THE SEVENTH EXCUSE is that one fears that, if it is disclosed, the lewd will follow his example and become emboldened in their sinning.

One is excused when one conceals with these intentions. If his intention is that the people believe him to be a pious man, it is hypocrisy and forbidden. However, if a person be such that his exterior and interior are the same, this is the degree of the truly righteous, but this is under the condition that he does not commit any sin secretly. However, when he has done so, if he says: "Say, tell the people too all that God Most High

knows!" this is ignorance and not proper, for preserving the secret of God Most High is an obligation.[1309]

Disclosing the Permission to Refrain from Charitable Acts out of Fear of Hypocrisy

Know that there are three degrees of devotion: one is that which is not related to the public, such as formal prayer and fasting; another is that which is related to the public, such as the offices of the caliphate, judgeship, and governance; and another is that which affects both the public and the official, such as preaching and causing (people) to remember (God).

AS FOR THE FIRST KIND, such as formal prayer, fasting, and Pilgrimage: refraining from them out of fear of hypocrisy is absolutely not proper. However, one must make an effort to fend off the hypocritical thought that strikes at the beginning of an act of worship or during it, and one should renew his declaration of Intention and one should neither prolong nor shorten his worship because people will notice, except in a situation where the intention of worship does not remain and all is hypocrisy. In that case, (the act) itself is not worship. However, so long as the root of the intention remains, it is not proper to leave off one's worship.

Fudayl (R) says: "Hypocrisy is that one abandon his worship, fearing the people's seeing it. However, whoever worships for the sake of the public, that is the ascription of partners with God."[1310] Know that Satan desires that thou not show devotion. When he cannot do that, he says to thee: "People are watching and (thy worship) is hypocrisy, not devotion," so that by means of this fraud, he may keep thee from worship. If thou pay attention to this and, for example, flee and go underground, he would also say this: "The people know that thou hast fled and become a recluse, and this is not piety. Rather, it is hypocrisy." So, the method is that thou sayest to him: "Keeping one's heart with the people and abandoning devotion because of them is also hypocrisy. Indeed, the people's seeing it or not seeing it is the same. I shall keep to the same to which I have been accustomed and suppose that the people do not see me." For, refraining for fear of the people is as though a person gives wheat to his own servant lad (and tells him) to winnow it. He does not winnow it and says: "I feared that if I winnowed it I would not be able to make it completely free (of chaff)." (The master) says: "O

[1309] That is, God Most High is privy to all and He is our confidante. One should not disclose the secret between man and God frivolously.

[1310] The ascription of partners with God (*shirk*) is a far greater sin than hypocrisy.

fool! Now thou hast abandoned the main thing and by that, not even the winnowing has been achieved!"

So, a servant (of God) has been commanded to be sincere. When he abandons the task, he has also abandoned sincerity, for sincerity lies in action. However, that which is related about Ibrahim Nakha'i (R)—that he was reading the Quran and when someone entered, he closed the book and said: "Let no one see that I am always reading the Quran"—was because he knew that when (the person) entered, he would have to speak, and he would have to leave off the reading of the Quran, so he considered it better to conceal it.

Hasan Basri says: "There was a person who would break into tears and would conceal that so that the people not know of it." This is permissible, for open weeping has no intrinsic merit. It is not an act of worship that is being abandoned. And he says: "There was a person who used to want to remove things from the road[1311] who refrained from doing so, lest he be recognized for piety." This is the story of a weak person who fears for himself that the people would find out about him and that his other acts of worship would become distracted. However, this caution out of fear of fame is not good. Rather, (the work) should be done and (any) hypocrisy (in the act) driven away—unless a person is weak and deems this advisable for himself; but there is a loss in this.

THE SECOND KIND is that which is related to people, such as judgeship, governance, and caliphate. These are among the great acts of worship when adorned with justice. If there is injustice, they are great sins. For, whoever does not have the faith in himself that he will be able to do justice, accepting such an office is forbidden, for the harm is tremendous, not like formal prayer and fasting in which there is not an intrinsic pleasure—the pleasure in that is that the people see.[1312] But, running a government—which is a great pleasure and which nourishes one's self esteem—is appropriate for the person who has faith in himself. However, if one has tested himself before achieving office and has exercised trustworthiness in affairs, but fears that when attaining office he will become changed and will dissemble for fear of removal from office, there is a difference of opinion. Some have said that he should accept it, as this is nothing more than a suspicion. Since he has tested himself, confidence lies in that. The correct view, in our opinion, is that it is not proper for him to accept (the office) because at that time the self

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[1311] "things from the road": things that obstruct, inconvenience, or injure travelers, such as stones thorns, and the like.

[1312] That is, the acts themselves do not produce a feeling of pleasure in the sense that satisfying one's appetites does. The pleasure for acts of devotion which satisfies the appetite for popular approval is, of course, harmful to the spiritual reward and purity of the those acts.

will promise that it will be fair. It may happen that this will be (the self's) coyness. When he achieves a governing office, he may change. Since he displayed hesitation from the first, in most cases he will change. Avoidance is preferable.

Governing is not the work of anyone save the strong. Abu Bakr (R) said to Rafi':[1313] "Never accept the office of sovereignty, even if it is only over two persons." Then when the Truly Righteous[1314] accepted the office of the caliphate, Rafi' said: "Didst thou not forbid me and now thou hast accepted?" (Abu Bakr) said: "Now I also forbid thee. May God's curse be upon him who does not do justice." The similitude of the objection of a weak person is that a man who forbids his own child from going near the water's edge goes into the water himself, as he knows how to swim. If the child does that too, he may perish. Whenever the ruler is an oppressor and cannot judge justly, sycophancy becomes necessary. His accepting judgeship or any other office of rule over others is not proper. If he has accepted, the fear of dismissal is not an excuse with regard to sycophancy. Rather, he should do justice so that he not be dismissed, and he should rejoice in justice, if he rules for the sake of God Most High.

THE THIRD KIND is preaching, issuing religious judgments, teaching, and the narration of Traditions, and in this, there is also a tremendous pleasure. Hypocrisy most often touches one by way of formal prayer and fasting, and this is close to the office of ruling others. There is this amount of difference: that causing remembrance, preaching, and (relating) Traditions, as they benefit the listener, so too they benefit the speaker and invite (him) to religion and prevent hypocrisy. Rule is not like that. Therefore, if someone is afflicted with hypocrisy, the opinion is that he should cease those (religious activities). Some have also fled from this.[1315] Most of the Companions (R) from whom religions judgments were sought passed (the requests) on to others. Bishr Hafi (R) hid a number of satchels of Traditions beneath the earth and said: "I find the passion for being a narrator of Traditions in myself. If I did not find that, I would have related them."

The forefathers have said that "*It was narrated to us*"[1316] is one of the gates of the world. Whoever says this is saying: "Show me to the highest place (in the assembly)." Someone requested permission from

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[1313] Rafi': Several men by the name of Rāfiᶜ are cited in the *Sirah*. No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1314] "Truly Righteous" (*Ṣiddīq*), an epithet for Abu Bakr, the first caliph, rgd. AH11-13/CE.

[1315] As did Ghazzali himself.

[1316] "It was narrated to us" (*haddathanā*) is the formula used when beginning to relate a Tradition of the Prophet.

'Umar (R) to instruct the people in wisdom every morning, but he forbade that, saying: "I fear that thou wilt puff thyself so much that thou wilt reach the Pleiades."[1317] Ibrahim Taymi (R) says: "When thou feelest the passion for talking in thyself, be silent. When thou feelest the passion for silence in thyself, speak out." Thus, it is our choice in this regard that the narrator (of Traditions) or the remembrancer (in the remembrance of God) should examine his own soul. If he finds any intention in his soul for an act of devotion to God Most High by speaking, even if be mixed with a hypocritical thought, he should not hold back and he should speak out. This correct intention in his soul will be nourished so as to increase in strength. Its rule is the rule of the voluntary formal prayers that are the Practice of the Prophet or the supererogatory formal prayers that one should not abandon because of hypocritical thoughts, as long as one finds the foundation of the intention. This differs from the office of a ruler: should concern be mixed with that, flight from it is preferable, for the intention is usually nullified.

It was for this that Abu Hanifah (R) fled from the high office of governance and judgeship that was offered to him. He said: "I am not suitable for that." He was asked why. He answered: "If I speak the truth that I am not suitable, I am not suitable. If I lie, a liar himself is not suitable for judgeship." He did not flee from or stop teaching.

However, if one does not find any intention for performing an act of worship in his soul, it is all hypocrisy and the pursuit of power. It is a religious duty incumbent upon him to refrain. But, when we are asked: "What should we do?" we look (at the situation). If there is no benefit for the people in his words—such as a person whose reminding is of a type of boasting, rhymed prose, quaint sayings, or words which encourage the people with the promise of mercy for their sins; or that his teaching be polemics, disputation, and debate which sow the seeds of envy and vainglory in the soul—we forbid him from that. For, forbidding him is a great good for him and for the people. However, if his words are profitable for the people, and in accordance with the Law, and the people consider him sincere, and his teaching with respect to the religious sciences is beneficial, we do not give him permission to desist. For, in opposing him, there lies the loss to others—and they are many, while in his speaking, he incurs little loss. In our opinion, the salvation of many persons is more important than the salvation of one. We offer him as a sacrifice for the people, for the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High aids this religion by means of people who have no portion in it." This means from those persons! So indeed, let us not add more to this that we say: "Do not stop and continue to exert thyself to distance thyself from

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[1317] "the Pleiades" (*thurayyā*): the constellation of that name, also known as the Seven Sisters, the daughters of Atlas in Greek mythology.

hypocrisy, and form correct intentions. Learn from thy former sermons and fear God Most High. Then frighten others (into the fear of God)."

QUESTION: If a person asks: "How do we know that the intention of the preacher is correct and what is that sign of that?"

ANSWER: Know that a correct intention is that (the preacher's) aim be that the people take to the path of God and that they turn away from worldliness, as a compassion for the people. If another person appears whose preaching is more beneficial and the people's acceptance of his words greater, he should rejoice at that. If a person has fallen into a well and there is a stone on the top of the well, he wants to liberate him according to the rule of compassion. He struggles greatly with that (stone). When (another) appears who (is strong enough to) remove the stone, (the former) contents himself with his pains and is happy with that. If the preacher does not rejoice and finds envy in himself, he should know that his purpose was that he call (people) to himself, not to God Most High. Another sign is that when the worldly and officials enter his assembly, he does not alter his speech, but continues in his customary manner. Another sign is that when his words carry the people into shouting and beginning to weep, and the basis of those words is not substantial, he abandons that theme. These and their like should be sought inside oneself. If one finds them and is not repulsed by them, this too is absolute hypocrisy. If one finds some displeasing thing in himself, it is the evidence that there is also another intention. He must strive until that other intention becomes overcome.

EXCURSUS: [THE JOY OF WORSHIP IS NOT ALWAYS HYPOCRISY]

It often happens that because of (the presence of) people a joy in worship appears, and that joy is valid and not a kind of hypocrisy, for a believer is always eager in an act of worship, but it may be that some obstacle prevents it. Perhaps, it is because of the people that that obstacle is lifted so that the joy pulsates. As when a person is at home, the evening prayer is hard for him because he is engaged in sleep and conversation with his folk, or the bedding has been prepared. When one happens to be in another's home, these obstacles are removed and the joy of worship appears. Or, when one happens to be in an unfamiliar house and sleep does not come, one busies oneself in formal prayer. Or, one sees some people who are all engaged in performing the evening obligatory formal prayer and he too hurries and busies himself with the evening obligatory formal prayer. Or, at a place where the people are fasting, or the food is not ready and the joy of fasting appears. Or, one sees some people in a mosque performing the voluntary night formal prayers, but is lazy (in that respect) at home. When he sees them, the laziness departs with the strength of approbation. Or, one sees the people

on Friday all engaged in the service of God; he too begins to perform the obligatory formal prayer and say the praises (of God), more than he does every day. All of these are possible and there is no hypocrisy in them.

Satan says to him: "Do not do it, for (the joy) appeared because of the people. It is hypocrisy!" Perhaps, the joy is because of the people and not out a desire for goodness and the downfall of obstacles. Satan says: "Do not do it." But the angels say: "Do it! The desire itself is in thee, but the obstacles are before thee. Now they have departed!"

So, one must separate these two from each other. The sign is that one imagines that if the people did not see him, while he saw them, would the joy of worship be the same? If it remains in place, it itself is the desire for goodness. If it does not, it is hypocrisy and he should cease. If both are present, both the desire for goodness and the love for the people's praise, he looks to discern which (motive) is the stronger and relies upon that. It is as though he hears a verse (of the Quran) and sees some people weeping. He too will weep, but if he were alone, he would not weep. This is not hypocrisy, for seeing the weeping of the people liquefied his heart. When he sees the people sorrowing, he also remembers. He begins to weep and wail. Perhaps, the source of the weeping is the softness of the soul and the moaning and wailing hypocritical so that others hear it. It may be that he falls from the sorrow, but at the same moment that he finds the strength to get up, he fears that it will be said that his ecstasy was not genuine. At that moment, he is again a hypocrite, but in reality, he was not.

It may happen that he is dancing and the strength comes to him, but he props himself against a person and goes slowly so that it not be said that his ecstasy left him quickly. It as though he seeks forgiveness and says: "*I seek refuge with God!*" and he says this because of a sin that he has recalled or sees some shortcoming in himself, while the people are still performing an act of worship. This is correct. The Messenger (S) says: "Hypocrisy has seventy doors." Whenever a hypocritical thought strikes, one must imagine that God Most High is aware of the pollution of his inner self and that he is in the enmity and anger of God Most High so that he may distance himself from himself and remember what the Messenger said: "*I seek refuge with God from the humility of hypocrisy.*" This is that the body be humble, but the soul be distracted.

Excursus: [Every Deed Which Is for Spiritual Reward Must Be Solely for God]

Know that in all that is an act of devotion, such as formal prayer and fasting, sincerity is a necessity. As for that (thing) which is permitted, if it is desired that there be a spiritual reward, sincerity is also a necessity. For example, if one makes an effort with respect to the needs of a Muslim for the sake of spiritual reward, one's resolve must be

steadfast and one must not expect any gratitude or recompense from him. It is the same for whoever teaches. If, for instance, one expected from the student that he follow him or serve him, he has sought a compensation and will not obtain spiritual reward. However, if he has not sought any recompense, but (the student) does a service for him, it is preferable that he not accept it. If he does, when there has been not a desire (for it), it would appear that the spiritual reward would not be lost. (The student) will not be astonished at one's turning away of the service if one does that. The circumspect have avoided that to the extent that when one of them fell into a well and a rope was brought, he swore that no one who had heard a Tradition from him or to whom he had taught the Quran should touch the rope, for he feared that (that aid) would be (counted) a recompense nullifying the spiritual reward (of his teaching).

Someone brought a present to Sufyan Thawri (R). He did not accept it. (The man) said: "I have never heard a Tradition from thee." (Sufyan) said: "Thy brother has. I fear that my heart will become more tender for him than for others."

Someone brought two purses of gold to Sufyan. (The man) said: "Thou knowest that my father was thy friend and ate of the lawful. Now this inheritance is lawful. Accept it from me." When he accepted it and that person had gone away, Sufyan sent those purses of gold by the hand of his son after him. By chance, he had remembered that his friendship with that person's father was for the sake of God Most High. Sufyan's son said: "When I returned, I could not stand it. I said: 'Is thy heart made of stone? Thou seest that I have a family and I have nothing and thou hast no mercy upon us!' Sufyan said: 'O son, thou always want to eat well. Will I be asked about that at the Resurrection? I do not possess the strength for that.'"

In the same way, the learner too ought not to seek anything in learning except the pleasure of God Most High and should not have any expectation from the teacher. It may happen that he suppose that it is permissible to display his obedience to his teacher so that he will be (more) earnest in teaching him. This is an error and the essence of hypocrisy. Instead, one should seek the esteem of God Most High through serving the teacher, and not (the esteem) of the teacher. In the same way, one should seek the satisfaction of one's mother and father through the satisfaction of God Most High and not make a display of himself to them with devoutness so that they will be pleased with him, for this is an immediate sin. In summary, any act from which one will seek spiritual reward must be purely for God, *may He be honored and glorified.*

CHAPTER NINE: CONCERNING THE TREATMENT OF PRIDE AND CONCEIT

Know that pride and self-importance are blameworthy traits and, in fact, enmity to God, may He be praise and exalted. Magnificence and grandeur are appropriate only for Him. For this reason, there are many reproaches for the tyrant and the arrogant in the Quran, as when He said: *Thus doth God print on every arrogant, disdainful heart* (Q. 40:35); and He said: *Then was disappointed every obdurate tyrant* (Q. 14:15); and He said through the voice of Moses (A): *"Lo! I seek refuge in my Lord and your Lord from every scorner who believes not in a Day of Reckoning."* (Q. 40:27)

The Messenger (S) said: "A person will not enter heaven who has in his soul pride in the amount of a grain or a mustard seed." And he (S) said: "There are people who make a business of self-importance until their names are recorded in the ledger of the tyrannical. They will receive the same punishment as do (the tyrants)."

In the Traditions, it is related that Solomon (A) commanded all the devils, jinn, fowl of the air, and mankind to come out. Two hundred thousand people and two hundred thousand jinn assembled upon his carpet.[1318] He commanded the wind to lift it and carry it close to the sky so that they could hear the voices of angels and their glorifications. It landed upon the earth in order to reach the depths of the sea. At that moment, he heard a voice: "If there were one atom of pride in the soul of Solomon, I would have swallowed him up in the earth before I would have taken him into the air."

The Messenger (S) said: "The arrogant will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection in the shape of ants beneath the people's feet, so despised are they by God Most High." And he (S) said: "There is a valley in hell called Habhab. It is right for God Most High to place the arrogant there." Salman Farsi (R) said: "The sin for which no act of devotion has any profit is pride."

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High will not look upon a person whose clothing drags on the ground in the way of arrogance and swaggering in vainglory." And he (S) said: "Once a man was strutting and admiring his magnificent garments. God Most High had him swallowed into the earth and he is still there, until the Resurrection." And he said: "Whoever magnifies himself and struts upon the earth sees God Most High's anger at him on the Day of Resurrection."

[1318] "his (Solomon's) carpet," upon which he and his court would fly through the air from place to place.

Muhammad bin Wasi' once saw his own son swaggering. He called him and said: "Dost thou have any idea who thou art? I bought thy mother with 200 dirhams and among the Muslims thy father is such that the fewer like him there are, the better!" Mutarrif bin 'Abdullah saw Muhallab[1319] strutting about. He said: "Slave! God Most High holds such a manner of going in enmity." (Muhallab) replied: "Beware! Dost thou know me?" He answered: "I know thee: first thou wert a putrid fluid and at the end (thou wilt be) an infamous corpse. In between, (thou art) the carrier of pollutions."

The Virtue of Humility

The Messenger (S) said: "No one has behaved with humility whose honor God Most High did not increase." And he (S) said: "There is no person whose head does not have reins held by the hands of two angels. When he shows humility, the reins are pulled upward and they say: 'O Lord God! Exalt him!' If he shows haughtiness, they drag his head down and say: 'O Lord God! Disgrace him!'" And he (S) said: "Blessed is that person who behaves humbly not out of desperation, who spends the wealth he has accumulated not in sin, who shows mercy upon the helpless, and who converses with the wise and learned."

Abu Salamah Madani[1320] tells of his grandfather who said: "Once the Messenger (S) was our guest while he was fasting. We brought him a cup of milk for his breaking of the fast. When he tasted it and found it sweet, he asked: 'What is this?' We said: 'We have mixed honey in it.' He set it down and did not drink it, saying: 'I do not say that it is forbidden, but whoever is humble for the sake of God Most High, God Most High exalts him and gives him eminence. Whoever is proud God Most High throws down and despises. Whoever spends in moderation God Most High makes self-sufficient. Whoever spends immoderately God makes a pauper. Whoever remembers God Most High often, God Most High takes as His friend."

Once a poor man with sores came to the door of the Messenger (S) and begged. The Messenger (S) was eating. He called him in and drew him to himself. The Messenger (S) sat him against his own thigh and said: "Eat." One of the Quraysh deemed the man filthy and looked upon him with dislike; he did not die before being afflicted with the same calamity.

[1319] Muhallab: al-Muhallab bin Abī Ṣufrah, Abū Sa'īd. He was a military officer who lived from about AH9/630CE to AH82/702CE. He led the invasion of Afghanistan and was the governor of Khorasan.

[1320] Abū Salamah Madanī: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High gave me the choice between being a messenger as a servant or being a king as a prophet. I hesitated in this, and my friend among the angels, Gabriel, was present and I looked to him. He said: 'Humble thyself before God Most High.' I said: 'I desire to be a servant and a messenger.'" God Most High revealed to Moses (A): "I accept the formal prayer of the person who is humble and is not arrogant with My people and whose heart holds fear. He passes the day in the remembrance of Me and holds himself from (his) carnal appetites for My sake." And the Messenger (S) said: "Nobility lies in piety, honor lies in humility, and riches lie in certainty."

Jesus (A) said: "Blessed are the humble of this world for they shall be the possessors of the pulpits at the Resurrection.[1321] Blessed are the persons who make peace among people in this world for their place shall be in Paradise.[1322] Blessed are the persons whose hearts are unsullied by the world, for seeing God Most High shall be their spiritual reward."[1323]

Said the Messenger (S): "Whomever God Most High has shown to the path to Islam, He has created in a good form and He has not made his condition such that He would be ashamed of him. Even though He has mixed his sustenance with humbleness, to God Most High he is one of the chosen."

Someone had prominent pockmarks and some people were eating. Whomever he sat beside would get up and move off. The Messenger (S) showed him to a place close to himself and said: "I like very much the person who takes his necessities in his hand and carries them to his home. They are the provisions for his family. For this reason pride departs from him." And he (S) said to the Companions: "Why is that I do not see the sweetness of worship upon you?" They asked: "What is the sweetness of worship?" He answered: "Humility." And he (S) said: "Whenever ye see a humble person be humble with him; when ye see the prideful, be proud so that their affront and baseness may be revealed."

NON-PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: 'Ayishah (R) says: "Ye are neglectful of the most excellent act of worship and that is humility." Fuday! (R) said: "Humility is that thou acceptest truth from whomever it may be, even a child or the most ignorant of people." Ibn al-Mubarak (R) says: "Humility is that thou considerest thyself lower than whoever has fewer of the things of the world than thou dost, so as to show him that thou dost not give thyself any value because of (thy) worldly goods, and that thou considerest thyself above anyone who has more of the world

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[1321] Cf., "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 5:3)
[1322] Cf., "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Mt. 5:9)
[1323] Cf., "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Mt. 5:8)

than thou, so as to show him that he has no value to thee because of his worldly goods."

God Most High revealed to Jesus (A): "Whenever I send thee a comfort, if thou comest before that humbly, I shall perfect that comfort upon thee." Ibn Sammak (R) used to say to Harun al-Rashid every day: "O Commander of the Believers! Thy humility lies in thine honor; it is more honorable that honor." (Harun) said: "Thou hast spoken very well." Then (Ibn Sammak) said: "O Commander of the Believers! To whomever God Most High has given wealth, beauty, and retinue and who does good with that wealth, is humble amidst his retinue, and is abstemious in his beauty; his name is recorded in the ledger of God Most High among the pure." Harun called for pen and paper and wrote down those words. Solomon (A) used to enquire of the rich in his kingdom in the morning, then he would sit with the poor. He used to say: "I am a pauper, a pauper as much as ye (are)."

Some of the saints have spoken about humility:

Hasan Basri (R) said: "Humility is that when thou comest out of thy house thou seest no one whom thou dost not consider superior to thyself." Malik bin Dinar (R) said: "If they cry from the top of the gate of the mosque: 'Let the worst of you come out,' no one will get himself in front of me, except by force." Ibn Mubarak heard this. He said: "The greatness of Malik was due to this." Someone came to Shibli, may God have mercy upon him. (Shibli) asked: "What art thou?"[1324] He answered: "I am that dot which is placed under (the letter) 'b';[1325] that is, there is nothing lower than I." (Shibli) said: "*May God destroy thy self-interest!* May God carry off thy self from before thee, for thou hast caused thy self to alight in another place!" One of the saints saw 'Ali (R) in a dream. He asked him to give him advice: He said: "How good is the humility of the rich before the poor for sake of the spiritual reward of the Hereafter! How much better is the pride of the poor, confident of the grace of God Most High, with the rich!"

Yahya bin Khalid[1326] (R): "When a generous person becomes pious, he becomes humble. When the fool or the ignoble becomes pious,

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[1324] "What art thou?" The text gives the question twice, first in Arabic (*mā anta?*) and then in Persian (*tū chih-ī?*).

[1325] The letter *b* in Arabic and languages written with a script based upon Arabic, such a Persian and Urdu, has a single dot under it.

[1326] Yahyā bin Khālid: of the famous Barmakid family (of Zoroastrian origin in northern Afghanistan) of ministers in Baghdad, especially in connection with Harun al-Rashid. His father Khalid had joined the revolt against the Umayyads which led to the establishment of the 'Abbasid dynasty of caliphs at Baghdad. Yahya was Harun's tutor. At the fall of the Barmakids, Yahya was imprisoned at Raqqah near Baghdad and all of his wealth was confiscated. He died AH180/805CE.

arrogance appears in him." Bayazid[1327] (R) says: "Until a servant (of God) considers no person worse than himself, he is prideful." One day Junayd said during the Friday assembly: "If it were not in the Traditions that at the end of time the elders of the people would be the most ignoble of them, I would not consider it right to address the congregation." Junayd (R) says: "To the people of the Unity of God, humility is pride. That is, humility is that one lower oneself, and since there is a need to keep low, one places one's self in a place so that one may then lower (oneself)." Whenever there was a wind or thunder, 'Ata-yi Sullami (R) would rise and, placing his hands on his belly like a pregnant woman, say: "Ah! That which comes upon people is all because of my inauspiciousness." Some people bragged in the presence of Salman. He said: "My beginning is a clot (of semen) and my end is carrion. Then, the worse from the better will appear at the scales, and the noble from the ignoble, which is I."[1328]

Disclosing the Truth of Pride and Its Harm

Know that pride is a trait of character, and character is an attribute of the soul, but its effect becomes evident on the exterior. The characteristic of pride is that one holds oneself before others and considers oneself better. From this a joyous puffing up appears in one. That puffing up which appears in him is called "pride." The Messenger (S) said: "*I seek refuge with Thee from the puffing up of pride.*"[1329] When this puffing up appears in him, he considers others less than himself and looks upon them as servants. It may be that he not recognize his own servants and say: "Who art thou to be fit to serve me?" Just as the caliphs do not grant permission for everyone to kiss their threshold, nor do they write "(thy) servant,"[1330] except to kings. This is the ultimate pride and reaches the grandeur of God Most High, for He receives everyone in (their) servitude and prostration. If one does not reach that level, he seeks

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[1327] Bāyazīd: Ṭayfūr bin ʿĪsā bin Sarwishān Bisṭāmī. One of the greatest of the Sufi shaykhs, he was called the "Sultan of the Cognizant" (*sulṭān al-ʿārifīn*). His father was a merchant of Bistam in north central Iran. After studying there, he went to Syria to continue his studies, remaining there 30 years and practicing asceticism. Many miracles are attributed to him. He died AH261/874-5CE.

[1328] In a note, HK observes that in the Arabic *Revival*, the corresponding text reads: "The Quraysh were contending for glory before Salman. He said: "But I have been created from a drop of uncleanliness. Then I shall become rotting carrion. Then the referral will be to the scales. If (the pan of my good deeds) is heavy, then I am noble. And, if it is light, I am blameworthy."

[1329] Ghazzali adds a Persian translation of the Arabic sentence.

[1330] That is, when writing to others, they do not call themselves "servant" (*bandah*), as is the usual custom in formal situations, and as it was, until recently, the custom in English letters to close with "Your servant," "Obediently yours," etc.

precedence in going and sitting. He expects respect. It gets to the point where, if he is advised, he does not accept it, but when he himself gives advice, he speaks harshly. If he is instructed, he becomes angry. He looks upon people as he looks upon beasts.

The Messenger (S) was asked: "What is pride?" He replied: "That one not submit to God and one look upon people with contempt." These two traits are heavy veils between one and God Most High. From them, all unseemly traits of character are born and one remains deprived of all good traits. Whoever is conquered by lordship, self-love, and self-importance cannot approve of that which he approves for himself for the Muslims—and this is not the way of the believers. And he cannot humble himself before another—and this is not the attribute of the pious. He cannot restrain his animus and envy. He cannot swallow his anger. He cannot withhold his tongue from backbiting, nor can he cleanse his soul from deceit and spite, for his soul is seized by hatred for anyone who does not bow to him.

The least of this is that he is engaged daily with self-adoration and self-promotion. He does not omit fraud, lies, or hypocrisy in order to promote himself in the eyes of people. The truth is that no one smells the perfume of being a Muslim so long as he does not forget himself. Indeed, neither does he obtain the ease of the world. One of the saints said: "If ye wish to smell the scent of heaven, consider yourself lower than all mankind so as to smell the scent of heaven."

If a person is granted the vision to see what is inside the hearts of those two arrogant persons when they meet, there is not in any dunghill the stench and ignominy which is in their hearts. Internally, they have the shapes of dogs and externally they adorn themselves as do women. They do not possess that companionability which Muslims have when they sit together. Indeed, thou findest tranquillity when thy totality is lost in whomever thou seest, and all becomes homage to him, until duality departs. He remains and thou dost not remain, or he is lost in thee and thou remainest, but he does not. Or, both of yourselves are lost in God Most High, and ye do not pay attention to yourselves. This is perfection. Perfection will necessarily come from this singularity. In sum, as long as there is duality, there can be no tranquillity. Tranquillity lies in the Oneness (of God) and singularity. This is the truth of pride and its harm.

Disclosing the Degrees of Pride

Know that some kinds of pride are more flagrant and greater than others. The difference arises from the fact that arrogance has three aspects: with respect to God Most High, the Messenger (S), or people.

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is arrogance with respect to God Most High, such as the pride of Nimrod, Pharaoh, and Iblis, and those who have claimed divinity, and (those who) have considered servitude to God

Most High demeaning. God Most High said: *The Messiah will never scorn to be a servant of God, nor will the angels who are near (to Him).* (Q. 4:172) Neither Jesus (A) nor the proximate angels disdain serving (God).

THE SECOND DEGREE is arrogance with respect to the Messenger of God Most High, such as the unbelieving Quraysh who said: "We shall not bow to a person like ourselves. Why is an angel not sent to us?" Or: "Why was someone powerful not sent? An orphan[1331] was sent!" *And they say: 'If only this Quran had been revealed to some great man of the two towns!'* (Q. 43:31)[1332] They were of two groups: for one group their pride became a veil so that they did not ponder and they did not recognize his Messengership; as when He said: *I shall turn away from My revelations those who magnify themselves wrongfully in the earth.* (Q. 7:146) He said: "I shall permit the proud to see the signs of truth." Another group knew, but rejected him. Because of their pride, they could not bring themselves to admit it, as when He said: *And they denied (the signs), though their souls acknowledged them, out of spite and arrogance.* (Q. 27:14)

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one be haughty with other servants (of God) and look upon them with contempt. He does not concede their rights, considers himself better than they, and puffs himself up. This, even though it is lower than the other two degrees, is nonetheless important for two reasons:

ONE (REASON) is that greatness[1333] is an attribute of God Most High. A weak, helpless man has nothing of his affair in his own hands. Whence comes greatness that a person (dare) consider himself its possessor? If he thinks himself great, he contends with God Most High in His attributes. He is like the slave who places a royal crown upon his head and sits upon a throne. Look at how deserving of loathing and punishment he becomes! Concerning this, God Most High said: *Greatness is a loincloth and majesty a robe; I have shattered whoever vies with Me in these two (attributes).*[1334] He said: "Greatness and majesty are My special attributes. I shall destroy whoever vies with Me in them."[1335] So, since pride over (His) servants is not fitting for anyone save the Creator, if one of His servants is overbearing to Him, he will

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[1331] The Prophet (S) was an orphan. His father 'Abdullah died on a trading expedition to Syria before his birth. He lost his mother when he was six years old.

[1332] *"the two towns"*: Makkah and Ta'if, a city about 40 miles east of Makkah.

[1333] It should be pointed out that many of the words used in Persian meaning "pride, proud, arrogance," etc., such as: *kibr, takabbur, kibriyā', mutakabbir*, etc., derive from the Arabic triliteral root *k-b-r* with the general meaning of largeness. Pride is equated with self-magnification. The Persian for "big, great, large" is *buzurg*, and *buzurgī* for "bigness, greatness, largeness."

[1334] This is not a verse of the Quran.

[1335] This is Ghazzali's interpretation in Persian of the preceding sentence in Arabic.

have competed with Him, just as when someone commands the personal slaves of the king, which is not proper for anyone other than the king.

ANOTHER REASON is that this pride is an obstacle preventing the acceptance of truth from others. When a people have this trait, they dispute about questions of religion. When the truth appears on the tongue of one, pride prompts the others to deny it and not to accept it. These are the traits of the hypocrites and the unbelievers, as God Most High said concerning the unbelievers: *Those who disbelieve say: 'Heed not this Quran, and drown out the hearing of it; haply ye may prevail.'* (Q. 41:26) And as He said: *And when it is said to him: "Be careful of thy duty to God, pride takes him to sin.* (Q. 2:206) When it is said to one: "Fear God Most High," his self-importance and self-esteem prompt him to persist in sin. Ibn Mas'ud (R) say: "It is the perfection of sin to say to someone: 'Fear God Most High.' He replies: 'Mind thine own affair.'" One time, the Messenger (S) said to someone: "Eat with thy right hand." (The other) replied: "I cannot." (The Messenger) said: "May he not be able to do it!" for he knew that the man had spoken out of pride. His hand became limp so that it no longer moved.

Know that the story of Iblis has been related to thee not as a tale, but so that thou may know to what the harm of pride leads. It was because of pride that he said: *"I am better than he.*[1336] *Thou didst create me of fire, while Thou didst create him of clay."* (Q. 38:76) His pride led him to the point of arrogance with respect to the command of God Most High and he did not prostrate himself [1337] so that he became accursed for eternity.

DISCLOSING THE CAUSES OF PRIDE AND THEIR TREATMENT

Know that whoever behaves arrogantly thinks that he has a quality that others do not have. That quality is perfection, and there are seven causes of that:

THE FIRST CAUSE of pride lies in knowledge, for when the learned person sees himself as being adorned with perfect knowledge, he considers others beasts in comparison with himself. Pride dominates him. Its effect is that he has an expectation that people should assist, serve and show homage to him, and he desires precedence. He is astonished if they do not offer that. If he looks at them or is invited by someone, he considers it a great favor (he does) to him. He puts people under obligation for his knowledge and in his talking about the Hereafter. He

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[1336] "him" refers to Adam. God created Iblis (Satan) our of fire, while He created man out of clay. For this reason, Iblis considered himself superior to man.

[1337] After creating Adam, God commanded the angels to prostrate themselves to him. They all obeyed with the exception of Iblis, who was for this reason cast out of heaven.

does not think himself one of them and he is more hopeful about his own affair (at the Resurrection). He fears more for them than for himself. He says: "Everyone needs my supplications and my piety and shall escape hell through me." For this reason, said the Messenger (S): *"The blight of knowledge is conceit."*

Truly, it is preferable to call such a person ignorant rather than learned, for true knowledge is that which makes known the danger of the affair of Hereafter to one and (makes one) recognize the narrowness of the Straight Path. Whoever has learned this sees himself far away from that (goal) and considers himself guilty. Out of the danger to his own fate and the fear that his knowledge will be a proof (against him), he does not engage in pridefulness. As Abu Darda (R) said: "With the addition of every bit of knowledge, a bit of pain is added." As for those persons who acquire knowledge and whose pride increases, there are two aspects:

ONE is that they do not learn true knowledge, which is the knowledge of religion. That is a knowledge by which one comes to know oneself and to discern the hindrances on the way of faith, the peril of the outcome, and the veil of God Most High. This knowledge increases the pain (of the consequences of one's sins) and humility, not pride. But, when one learns medical science, mathematics, astronomy,[1338] language, and the science of debate and contradicting, from these nothing is increased save pride. Close to the science of religion is the science of legal decrees (based upon Islamic Law).[1339] That is the science of the reform of the people of the world. Therefore, it is a worldly science, even though there is a need for religion in it; fear does not arise from it. Indeed, when it stands by itself and does not call in other sciences, the soul becomes dark and pride triumphs. *There is not information like examination.* Study these people to see how they are. And in the same way, the knowledge of the flights of the reciters of the remembrance of God with their rhymed prose and idle talk, and their searching words that bring people to crying out, and the subtleties by which they excite extremism among the sects so that the common folk suppose that that is the path of religion—all of these sow the seeds of pride, envy, and enmity in their souls. There is no increase from this pain and affliction; instead, the puffing up of hubris and pride is augmented.

THE OTHER ASPECT is that it may happen that a person study some beneficial science, such as the commentary of the Quran, the Traditions, the biographies of the forefathers—and studies of this kind which we have mentioned in this book and in the volumes of *The*

[1338] "astronomy" (*'ilm-i nujūm*): In Ghazzali's time, this was more concerned with astrology than purely scientific astronomical observations, although almost incidentally considerable astronomical knowledge was collected.

[1339] Legal decisions (*fatāwā*) concerning religious matters issued by a *muftī*, a qualified expounder of Islamic law.

Revival, and the like—and still be arrogant. The reason for this is that his inner self is in essence malicious and he has a bad character. His aim in studying these sciences and his reciting them is to assume them, not to exercise piety. When knowledge enters him, it assumes the character of his inner being, as when medicine enters into the stomach, before it can act, it changes according to the character of the stomach, as pure water which falls from the sky in one character increases the properties of whatever plant it reaches. If what it reaches is bitter, it becomes more bitter; if what it reaches is sweet, it becomes sweeter.

Ibn 'Abbas (R) relates that the Messenger (S) said: "There are a people who recite the Quran and it does not pass their throats. They say: 'Who reads the Quran as we do and knows what we know?'" Then he looked at the Companions and said: "They may be from amongst you and my people, and they will all be firewood in hell."

'Umar (R) said: "Do not be among the tyrants of the learned, for then your knowledge will not be faithful to your ignorance." God Most High commanded the Messenger (S) to be humble and said: *And lower thy wing (in kindness) to those who follow thee.* (Q. 26:215) It was for this reason that the Companions guarded themselves against pride. Once Hudhayfah (R) was made the imam. Then, he said: "Seek another leader, because it occurs to me in my heart that I am superior to you." When (the Companions) were so fearful of the prideful thought, how will others be saved? Where can such a learned person be found in such an era (as this)?[1340] Indeed, rare is the scholar who knows that this trait is blameworthy and that one must shun it, for most are those who are negligent about this and glory in their own arrogance, saying: "I give so-and-so no importance and do not esteem him. I do not give him any regard," and the like.

Consequently, if a person has an awareness of these points, he is extremely valuable and visiting him is an act of worship. All should regard him as a blessing. If not, it is that which is in the Traditions: "There will come a time when whoever does one tenth of your acts will achieve salvation," as though it were the fear of hopelessness. However, a little in this (our) era is much, for no companion has remained in religion and the truths of religion have become obliterated. Most of those who travel the way are alone and have no companion. One's sorrow is doubled. So, one must content oneself with religion, *God Most High willing*.

THE SECOND CAUSE of pride is asceticism and worship. For, the worshipper, the ascetic, and the Sufi are not without pride in that they

[1340] Ghazzali is referring to his own period, but the caution is appropriate for all periods, including our own.

consider it preferable that others greet and visit them, and, one might say, they place an obligation upon the people from (their) acts of worship. It may be that they suppose that others have been ruined while "he is safe and alive." It may be that if a person troubles him and some calamity befalls (that person), he attribute that to his own miraculous powers and imagine that that (calamity) was for his sake!

The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever says that the people have been ruined is himself ruined; that is, he looks upon the people with contempt." And he (S) said: "It is an absolute sin for a person to hold his brother Muslim in contempt. There is a great difference between him and the person who gives him a blessing, while (that person) considers him better than himself and loves him for the sake of God Most High. It is feared that God Most High may grant (the other) his degree and deprive him of the blessing of his own worship. As, among the Children of Israel there was a man—there was none more worshipful (than he), and there was another—there was none more sinning (than he). This devotee was sitting and a bit of cloud was stopped over his head.[1341] The sinner said: "I'll go and sit by him so that perhaps God Most High have mercy upon me for his sake." When he sat close to him, the devotee said to himself: "What has he right to sit beside me when there is none more wicked than he?" (Aloud) he said: "Get up and be off from me, O sinner!" (The sinner) rose and the cloud went together with him. A revelation came to the messenger of that era: "Say to both to begin their work anew, for We have forgiven him who had sinned because of his good faith, and whatever the devotee had accomplished We have canceled because of his pride."

Someone put his foot on the neck of a devotee.[1342] (The devotee) said: "Take it off; for, by God, God will not have mercy upon thee." A revelation came: "Say unto him: 'O thou who, with thine oath, command Me not to forgive him. Instead, I shall not forgive thee." It is usually the case that every devotee who is distressed by someone thinks that God Most High will not have mercy upon (his tormentor). Perhaps he says: "He will quickly see the retribution for that!" When some harm comes to (that person), he says: "Dost thou see what happened to him?" That is: "It was because of my miraculous powers!" This fool does not know that many unbelievers tormented the Messenger (S) from whom God Most

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[1341] The worshipper was sitting in the shade of a stationary bit of cloud, a sign of divine favor.

[1342] The curious reader may well wonder how the devotee had found himself in such an unfortunate predicament. In the Arabic *Revival*, of which the *Alchemy* is a Persian summary, Ghazzali gives a fuller version of the story: "It is related that a man from the Children of Israel came to a devotee of the Children of Israel. He placed his foot on (the devotee's) neck while he was prostrating himself (in prayer). He said: 'Raise thy foot! For by God, God will not forgive thee.' A revelation came...," etc. (Revival)

High did not exact revenge, and for some of them He appointed (the acceptance of) Islam. He thinks that he is more beloved than the messengers are and that He would take revenge for him! Ignorant devotees are so. (But) the perspicacious are thus: they think that whatever calamity befalls mankind is from the inauspiciousness of their[1343] hypocrisy and their shortcomings.

When 'Umar (R) with all of that truthfulness and sincerity that he had, asks Hudhayfah (R): "Dost thou see the sign of hypocrisy upon me?" then, the believer must always practice piety and always fear, while the foolish devotee performs the external rites with a soul tainted with the filth of pride and conceit, and he does not fear that. Truly, anyone who is certain that he is superior to others has by that ignorance nullified his own acts of worship, for there is no sin greater than ignorance. One day the Companions (R) were heaping praises upon a man. By chance, that man appeared there. They said: "O Messenger of God! This is the good man we were just talking about." The Messenger (S) said: "I see the tokens of hypocrisy in him." They were astonished. When he reached the Messenger (S), the Messenger said to him: "By the God Who is over thee, speak the truth: dost thou ever think that there is no one of these people better than thee?" He replied. "Yes." Then the Messenger (S) said: "This wickedness is inside him; I saw it upon him with the light of prophethood and it is called hypocrisy." This is a great blight upon the learned and the devotees, and they are divided into three classes:

THE FIRST CLASS is that the soul cannot be emptied of it, but one shows humility by effort. That is, he is acting as though he considers others better than himself so that it does not appear in any form in his transactions or speech. This man cannot uproot the tree of pride from his inner self, but he cuts off all of its branches.

THE SECOND CLASS is that one restrains his tongue so as not to reveal it and says: "I consider myself to be behind everyone," but in his behavior and actions things appear that are signs of internal pride; as, wherever he is, he seeks the place of honor and walks in front. The one who is learned turns his head to one side as though he disdains mankind. The one who is a devotee has a sour expression on his face, as though he were angry with mankind. Both of these fools do not know that knowledge and deeds are neither in arrogance nor in peevishness. Rather, they are in the soul and, externally, its radiance is all humility, compassion, and cheerfulness.

The Messenger (S) was the most knowing) and most judicious of mankind. No one was more humble and more cheerful than he. He never looked upon anyone, except with smiles and cheerfulness. With all of that, he was addressed (by God): *And lower thy wing (in kindness) to*

[1343] "their": this refers to the perspicacious, not mankind in general.

those who follow thee. (Q. 26:215) And He said: *It was by the mercy of God that thou (O Muhammad) wast lenient with them, for if thou hadst been stern and fierce of heart, they would have dispersed from round about thee.* (Q. 3:159) It is from the mercy of God Most High that thou wert cheerful, mild, and friendly, lest they dislike thee.[1344]

THE THIRD CLASS is those who reveal it with their speech, who glorify and flaunt themselves, who sing their own praises and make claims to states and miracles. The devotee says: "Who is so-and-so? What are his acts of worship? I am always fasting and I keep vigil every night and recite the whole Quran every day. No one intends any trouble for me but he is destroyed! So-and-so gave me trouble and he saw what happened; his wealth and children were destroyed." It may be that he competes well, so that if he sees some people performing the night formal prayers, he performs more until they are left helpless. If they are fasting, he sits hungry for a time.

As for the scholar, he declares: "I know so many varieties of knowledge. What does so-and-so know? Who was his teacher?" If he debates, he strives to take his opponent prisoner, even if (his words) be false. Night and day, he busies himself learning phrases, words, and bizarre rhymed prose in order to use them in assemblies to attract attention to himself. Perhaps, he learns some obscure words, technical terms, or traditions in order to overcome others and display their deficiencies. Which scholar or devotee is it that is devoid of such thoughts, in a lesser or greater degree?

So, when one sees this and hears that the Messenger (S) says: "Whoever has a single kernel of pride in his soul will be deprived of Paradise," and (pride) will increase nothing for him save pain, sorrow and fear, he will not take to arrogance and will know that God Most High says: "Thou hast a value for Me, even if thou hast no value in thine own opinion. If thou believest thyself to be valuable, thou art without value to Me." Whoever has not perceived these truths of religion is better called an ignoramus rather than a scholar.

THE THIRD CAUSE is pride of ancestry, as some who are 'Alawis,[1345] or highborn suppose that the people are their clients and slaves, even though they be pious and intelligent. They harbor this pride inside themselves even if they do not express it, but when anger appears, it is exposed and shows itself in speech and behavior. They say: "What worth and dignity dost thou have that thou speakest to me? Dost thou not know thy place?" and the like.

[1344] Ghazzali's paraphrase of the preceding Quranic verse.

[1345] 'Alawis: descendants of 'Ali.

Abu Dharr (R) said: "Someone was fighting with me. I said: 'O son of a black woman!' The Messenger (S) said: 'Do not overdo it, for no white child has a superiority over a black child, except when he is ahead in piety.'" Abu Dharr (R) said: "I lay down and said to that man: 'Place the sole of thy foot on me.'"[1346] Behold! When he realized that it was pride (that had made him speak thus), how he humbled himself in order to shatter that pride!

Two men were boasting in the presence of the Messenger (S). One said: "I am the son of so-and-so, (the son of) so-and-so; who art thou?" The Messenger (S) said: "Two persons flaunted themselves before Moses (A). One said: 'I am the son of so-and-so (the son of) so-and-so,' and he enumerated his great ancestors to the ninth generation. Revelation came to Moses (A): 'Say to him that all nine of them are in hell and thou wilt be the tenth of them.'" And the Messenger (S) said: "Cease boasting about people who have become charcoal in hell. If not, thou wilt be lower than those beetles that—seeing a person's feces—smell and taste them."

THE FOURTH CAUSE of pride is beauty. This is more common among women, as 'Ayishah (R) said about a woman: "She is short." The Messenger (S) said: "Thou hast backbitten her, and this was because of thine own stature. If thou hadst been short, thou wouldst not have said that."

THE FIFTH CAUSE of pride is wealth. One says: "My property and comfort are thus while thou art a beggar and penniless. If I wanted to, I could buy so many slaves like thee," and the like. The story of the two brothers[1347] in *The Cave* (Q. 18:32-44), when one of them said: *'I am more than thee in wealth and mightier in the respect of men,'* (Q. 18:34)[1348] was to this purpose.

THE SIXTH CAUSE of pride is power over the weak.

THE SEVENTH CAUSE of pride is (having) followers, students, slaves, servants, and disciples. In all, everything that a person considers a

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[1346] "on me" (*bar rūyi-man*): the phrase could also be rendered "upon my face."

[1347] Ghazzali calls them brothers (*barādar*), but the passage in the Quran, using the dual form, refers to them as two men (*rajulayn*).

[1348] The parable tells of two men both blessed with fruitful gardens. One brags of his blessings to the other and has even greater expectations for the next life, while the other disputes with him and berates him for his boasting, warning him that the blessings of the world are subject to loss. Then, the braggart's garden was beset calamities and all was lost. He then realizes the error of his ways.

comfort and takes pride in, even if there is no comfort, so that a eunuch too boasts for reasons of his eunuchism to other eunuchs.

These are the causes of arrogance. However, the reason it becomes disclosed are enmities and envy, for every person who has an enemy wishes to vaunt himself over him. It may be that the cause is hypocrisy, for one takes to vaunting oneself before people in order to be admired, so that if one argues with someone whom one knows to be superior to one, one is humbled inside oneself, but acts arrogantly so that the people not know (of one's inferiority to the other). Now, since thou hast learned the causes, the treatment must be learned.

Disclosing the Treatment of Pride

Know that the treatment of an illness which, in the amount of a grain, will close off the path of happiness to one and exclude one from heaven, is an individual obligation. No person is free of this illness, and its treatment is of two kinds: one is general and the other particular:

AS FOR THE GENERAL TREATMENT, is a compound of theory and practice:

AS FOR THE THEORETICAL: it is that one come to know God Most High so that one understands that pride and greatness are not attainable and are not appropriate to anyone but to Him. He should know himself in order to understand that there is no person and no thing more humble, more contemptible, more base, and more detestable than he. This is a purgative that will expel the root and substance of the sickness from within. If a person desires to know the totality of this, one passage from the Quran is sufficient, that which He said: *Perish man! How ungrateful he is! From what thing doth He create him? From a drop of sperm, He creates him and gives proportion to him. Then, He makes the way easy for him; then, He causes him to die and consigns him to the grave; then, when He wills, He raises him to life again.* (Q. 80:14-22) God Most High has described the amount of (man's) own capacity to him, and has declared the beginning, the end, and the middle of his affair.

As for the beginning, He said: *"From a drop of sperm."* One must understand that nothing is or exists more worthless than semen. (A person) is non-existent. He has no name or particulars. He is in the concealment of non-existence, in eternities without beginning or end until the time of creation, as He said: *Has there come upon man a period of time in which he was a thing unremembered?* (Q. 76:1) So God Most High created earth, which is not more contemptible than he, and sperm and a clot of blood, which is bit of blood and liquid, and there is nothing more unclean than that. He made him be out of non-being. And He made (man's) origin lowly earth, putrid liquid, and unclean blood. He was a

lump of flesh without hearing, sight, speech, strength, and motion. Rather, he was an inanimate thing unaware of itself until something else touched it. Then He created for him hearing, sight, taste, speech, power, arms and legs, eyes, and all (his) organs; suchlike that he sees there was nothing of these in the earth, nor in the sperm, nor in the blood. And, He created in him so many wonders and marvelous things so that he might know the beauty, majesty and grandeur of the Creator through them, not that he boast of them. For, it was not through his own effort that they were caused so that he should boast of them. As He said: *And of His signs is this: He created you of dust, and behold ye are human beings, dispersing (everywhere)!* (Q. 30:20) This is the beginning of his affair. Behold! Is there room for pride—or room for being ashamed of himself?

As for the middle of his affair, it is that He brought him into this world and nurtured (him) for a while. And He gave him faculties and limbs. If He had put his affair into his own hands and had made him self-sufficient, it would have been permissible for him to fall into error and imagine that he is someone; but, He did not do this either. Instead, He suspended hunger, thirst, sickness, heat, cold, pain, sorrow, and a hundred thousand calamities over his head so that he would never be certain of himself at any hour. Perhaps he will die, or go blind, or become deaf, or go mad, or become ill, or be wounded, or perish from hunger and thirst. (God) has made his benefit to lie in bitter medicines, so that if they are beneficial, at the same time he suffers. And He has placed his detriment in good things, so that if he finds pleasure, he also suffers from them. He has not placed anything of his affair in his hand, so that what he wants to know, he does not know, and what he wants to forget, he cannot. What he does not want to think about overwhelms his heart, and what he wants to think about takes flight from his heart. With all of these wonders of artifice, perfection, and beauty with which He has created him, He has made him so impotent that there is nothing more unfortunate, more ignoble, and more helpless than he.

As for his end, it is that when he dies, neither hearing, nor sight, nor strength, nor beauty, nor body, nor organs will remain. Rather, he will become stinking carrion at which all will hold their noses. He will become a defilement in the grave, the ambition of worms and the insects of the earth. Then, he will becomes dust, humble and base. If he remained thus, he would have profited and be the equal of the beast, but he has not found even this good fortune. Instead, he is gathered at the Resurrection, and held in a stopping place of awe. He sees the heavens split asunder, the stars thrown down, the sun and moon eclipsed, the mountains like carded wool, and the earth transformed. The guardians of hell throw nooses, hell roars, and the angels place the records of their deeds in their hands, one by one, so that he sees all that he has done of infamous acts and shameful deeds in his lifetime. He reads them one by one and is put to shame. They say: "Come and give answer! Why didst

thou say this? Why didst thou do that? Why didst thou eat this? Why didst thou sit down? Why didst thou stand up? Why didst thou look at that? Why didst thou think this?" Then, if—*and God is (our) Refuge*—he is not able to come through this, he is cast into hell and he says: "Would that I had been a swine, a dog, or dust: for they have been spared all of this punishment."

What room is there for arrogance and what cause for pride in a person whose condition may possibly be worse than that of a dog or a pig? If all the particles of heaven and earth mourn his suffering and misfortune, and the scroll of his ignominies and shameful acts is read, they would still fall short. Hast thou ever seen that when a king seizes someone for a crime and imprisons him and he is in danger of being hanged and turned into an exemplary punishment that he occupies himself in prison with boasting and pridefulness? All mankind in this world are in the prison of the King of the Universe. They have committed many crimes and do not know the outcome. What place is there for pride and boasting in such circumstances? Whosoever has known himself to be thus, that (self)-knowledge will be his purgative. It will completely tear out the roots of pride from within him so that he sees nothing viler than himself. Instead, he wishes that he were dust, or a bird, or a solid object that would not be in such peril.

AS FOR THE PRACTICAL TREATMENT, it is that one take up the way of the humble in all circumstances and actions, as the Messenger (S) would eat his bread upon the earth and would not recline. He would say: "I am a servant and I eat as servants do." Salman (R) was asked: "Why dost thou not wear fine clothing?" He answered: "I am a slave. If, one day, I am freed in the Hereafter, I shall not be without fine clothing."

Know that one of the secrets of formal prayer is the humility that is obtained in the bowing and the prostration when one places his face, the most treasured (part of the body), upon the earth, which is more humble. The pride of the Arabs was such that they would not bend their backs before anyone; therefore, this prostration was a great victory over them. So, one must oppose everything which commands pride. Pride appears on the face, on the tongue, in the eye, in sitting, in clothing, and in all activities and rests. One must drive all (such behavior) away from oneself with perseverance, until (doing so) becomes natural.

The effects of pride are many: one is that (a person) desires not to go about alone, so that no one is with him.[1349] One must avoid this. Hasan Basri (R) would not allow anyone to accompany him. He would say: "My soul does not remain settled with that." Abu Darda (R) says: "The more that people go about with thee, the farther thou goest from

[1349] The reference is to an entourage.

God Most High." The Messenger (S) used to walk in the midst of a group of people; sometimes it would happen that he would send them on ahead.

Another is that (a person) desires that people stand in his presence and rise for him. The Messenger (S) disliked it when anyone stood up for him. 'Ali, may God honor him, says: "Say to whoever desires to see hell: 'Look at a man who is seated while another stands before him.'"

Another is that, out of pride, one does not visit a person. Sufyan Thawri (R) arrived in Makkah. Ibrahim Adham (R) called him: "Come and relate Traditions to us!" Sufyan came and Ibrahim said: "I wanted to display again his humility."

Another is that one desires that a poor man not sit near him. The Messenger (S) used to give his hand to the poor person. He would let it remain until the man released it. He would break bread with whoever was sick or injured, for (reason of) which others would avoid him.

Another is that one not do any work in one's home. The Messenger (S) used to work in the house. 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz[1350] had a guest. The lamp went out. The guest said: "Shall I get some oil?" ('Umar) said: "No, for ordering a guest about is not generous." He said: "Shall I awaken the servant?" ('Umar) said: "No. Sleep takes precedence, and he is sleeping." Then, he himself rose and brought a container and poured oil into (the lamp). The guest said: "O Commander of the Believers, didst thou rise and do it?" He said: "Yes. I was 'Umar when I went and I have come back 'Umar."

Another is that one does not pick up one's necessities and carry them home. The Messenger (S) picked something up to carry it home. Someone wanted to send it (home) for him so that he would not have to carry it. (The Messenger) did not permit him and said: "It is better for the owner of the goods (to do that)." Abu Hurayrah (R) had put some firewood on his shoulders and was passing through the market, saying: "Make way for the commander!" At that time, he was a commander. 'Umar (R) would go into the market carrying meat in his left hand and a whip in his right hand.

Another is that one does not go out until his clothing is well arranged. 'Umar bin al-Khattab (R) was seen in the market with a whip and fourteen patches sewn on his loin wrapper, some of them of old silk. 'Ali, the Commander of the Believers, (R) had a short old garment. He was rebuked (for wearing that). He said: "In this way the soul is humbled. Others will follow (my) example and the souls of the poor will be happy." Tawus (R) said: "When I wash my clothing, I do not get my heart back for several days, until it has become dirty again. That is,

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[1350] 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz: See 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz (Note 784).

(when wearing freshly washed clothes) I find a languor and a pride in my heart." 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz used to buy clothing for a thousand dinars before becoming caliph. He used to say: "It is very fine, it should be softer than this." After he succeeded to the caliphate, his clothing would be purchased for five dirhams. He would say: "It is good, but it should be coarser than this." Then, he was asked: "What is this?" He said: "God Most High has given me a self which savors and yearns. Whatever it tastes it yearns for another degree (beyond that), until now (it has tasted) the caliphate, beyond which there is no other rank. So now, it yearns for eternal kingship[1351] and is seeking that."

Do not suppose that fine clothes are all out of pride, for there is the person who likes the good in everything. Its sign is that he likes it in private as well. And there is the person who shows his pride by means of old clothes in order to present himself as an ascetic. Jesus (A) said: "What is it that ye wear the clothes of the pious while ye have made your insides in the image of wolves? Put on royal garments and soften your hearts with the fear of God Most High."[1352]

'Umar (R) arrived in Syria wearing old, dusty clothes. They said: "There are many enemies here. What harm will there be if thou puttest on finer clothing?" He replied: "God Most High has honored us with Islam; we should not seek honor in any other thing."

To summarize, whoever wants to learn humility, must study the manner of the life[1353] of Mustafa (S) and follow his example. Abu Sa'id Khudri (R) says: "The Messenger (S) would feed animals and tether camels, sweep his house, milk sheep, stitch (his) shoes, and patch (his) clothing. He ate with his servants and when the servant became tired from grinding, he would assist him. He would buy from the market and wrap (his purchases) in a corner of his wrapper and bring them home. He was the first to greet the poor and the rich, the small and the great, and would give them his hand. He would make no distinction between freeman and slave, black or white, or poor or rich. He used to have one garment for the day and another for the night. He would accept the invitation of any disheveled and dusty person and would not despise whatever was set before him, no matter how little. He would not keep the evening food for the morning, nor the morning food for the evening. He was good-natured, he was generous, he was good company, he was

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[1351] "eternal kingship": that is, the Hereafter.

[1352] Compare: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matthew 7:15)

[1353] "life": *sīrat* (Arabic *sīrah*). The Arabic root *s-y-r* is about movement, travel, going, etc. *Sīrah* has the general meaning of "conduct, character, comportment, demeanor, behavior, way of life attitude, etc." (Wehr). In a more specialized usage, it means "biography, history." The term *Al-Sīrah* (The Biography) is used to refer to the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (S).

smiling without laughter, he was sorrowful without frowning, he was humble without being abject, he was awe-inspiring without being harsh, he was generous without extravagance, he was merciful with all, he was sensitive, his head was always lowered, and he envied no one." So, whoever desires happiness should take him as an example and it was for this that God Most High praised him, saying: *And lo! Thou art of a tremendous nature.* (Q. 68:4)

AS FOR THE TREATMENT IN DETAIL, it is that one look to see that which one is proud about:

If it be due to ancestry, one must learn one's ancestry, for God Most High has explained this: *And He began the creation of man from clay; then He made his seed from an extract of despised fluid.* (Q. 32:7-8) He said: Thine origin is dust and thy setting out is from a drop of sperm; therefore, a drop of sperm is thy father and dust thy grandfather. Which is the meaner of the two? If thou sayest: "But my father is still alive!" between thee and thy father, there is a drop of sperm, a clot of blot, a morsel of flesh,[1354] and many infamies. Why dost thou not look at those? It is astonishing that if thy father had sifted dirt or cupped,[1355] thou wouldst be ashamed that he had touched dirt and blood, while thou thyself are from dust and blood. Why dost thou strut about arrogantly? When thou hast learned this, thou wilt be like the person who thinks he is a descendant of 'Ali while two sound witnesses testify that he is slave and the son of such-and-such a cupper. The import of this is made clear to him, that it is so. When he has comprehended this, he will no longer behave arrogantly, nor will he be able to do so. Moreover, whoever boasts of his ancestry boasts of others. Excellence must be in thee, not in another, for if a worm arise from the urine of a human being, it is not superior to the worm arising from the urine of a horse.

If the pride is due to beauty, whenever someone vaunts one's personal beauty, he ought to examine his insides to see what ignominies (are to be found there). He looks to see what nastiness is in his stomach and bladder, in his veins, his nose, his ears, and in all of his organs. What does he wash off himself every day with his own hand, that which he

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[1354] "a morsel of flesh" (*mudghah*): an embryo or fetus.

[1355] Cupping (*hajjāmī kardan*) and cuppers (*hajjām*): the practice and practitioners of letting blood out of cut veins to relieve fevers, illnesses, etc. Heated cups or glass vessels were used to draw out the supposedly tainted blood from the sufferer. As bleeding voids purification (*tahārat*), bloodletters or cuppers were not held in high esteem (as was the case with butchers), though the practice was considered beneficial to society. Most often, barbers were the practitioners because of their familiarity with the use of razors in shaving. Socially, they were of a higher status than night-soil collectors, but lower than butchers.

cannot bear to see or smell and he is always carrying (inside him)?[1356] Then, he looks at his creation from menstrual blood and sperm, which passes through the way of urine, in order that he may come into existence.

Tawus (R) saw someone strutting about. He said that is not the behavior of a person who knows what is inside his belly. If a human being does not wash himself one day, he is filthier than a dunghill, for there is nothing in a dunghill filthier than that which appears from him. And then, the beauty of his form is not his to brag about, and the ugliness of others is not theirs with which to find fault. His beauty cannot be relied upon either, for it turns to ruin with a single illness, and small pox makes him uglier than all. All of this does not justify pride.

As for that pride which is in physical strength, one should reflect that if one of his veins becomes painful, there is no one more helpless than he. Should a fly seize something from him, he is more impotent than (the fly). If a gnat gets into his nose, or an ant gets into his ear, he is more helpless (than they) and it is feared that he may perish! If a thorn pierces his foot, he remains where he is. Then, should he possess great strength, a bull, ass, lion, or an elephant is stronger than he. What is there to brag about for something in which bulls, and asses have precedence over thee?

However, if one flaunts one's pride for wealth, servants, and slaves, and for rule and command, all of these are things external to one. If a thief should steal his wealth, or he be deprived of his office, what remains in his hands? And then, there are many Jews and foreigners whose wealth is greater than his, and there are many stupid and ignoble persons whose governing authority is greater than his. In sum, whatever is not in thee is not thine. All of (the other) is on loan, and nothing of all of that is thine.

From all of these causes, those in which he can take pride are evidently knowledge and worship, and their treatment is more difficult, for they are perfection. Knowledge is dear and great to God Most High, and knowledge is one of the attributes of God Most High. Therefore, it is hard for a learned person not to be attentive to himself, but this may be facilitated in two ways:

[1356] A reference to practice of washing oneself after a bowel movement, a much cleaner practice than smearing oneself with toilet paper (or corn cobs, leaves and the like, which was the method in the West before toilet paper was invented), provided the hands (particularly the left hand which is used for this purpose) are scrupulously washed afterwards.

THE FIRST WAY is that one know that the writ (of God) over the scholar is more tremendous and his danger is greater, for the deeds for which the ignorant may be excused will not be excused for the learned, and the crime of the learned is more blatant. One must meditate upon the Traditions that have come down about the dangers of the learned person's affair. Indeed, in the Quran, God Most High has likened the culpable scholar who has committed an offense in knowledge to an ass bearing a load of books on its back: *(The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is) as the likeness of the ass carrying books.* (Q. 62:5) And He likened them to a dog: *Therefore, his likeness is as the likeness of a dog. If thou attackest him, he pants with his tongue out, and if thou leavest him, he pants with his tongue out.* (Q. 7:176) That is, whether he knows or does not know, his own nature does not leave. What is meaner that an ass or a dog?

In truth, if at the end one does not find salvation, all the inanimate bodies are better than he, not to mention animals! It was for this that one of the Companions (R) would say: "I wish that I were a bird!" Another would say: "I wish that I were a sheep, slaughtered and devoured!" Another would say: "I wish that I were a piece of straw!" So, if one is aware of the danger of the ending, there is no care for pride, so that when he sees someone more ignorant than himself, he says: "He has not learned. He is excusable for his sinning and he is better than I." Or, when he sees someone more learned than himself and says: "He knows what I do not know. He is better than I." Or, if he sees a youth or a child, he says: "His sins are fewer than mine. He is better than I." Indeed, if he sees an unbeliever, he is not arrogant and he says: "Perhaps he will become a Muslim and find a good end."

How many there were who saw 'Umar before (the advent of) Islam and who were arrogant to him! That arrogance was an error in the knowledge of God Most High! Since greatness is in the salvation of the Hereafter, and that is inscrutable, each person must be occupied with the fear of that lest he become prideful

THE SECOND WAY is that one understand that pride is appropriate for God alone. God holds whoever vies with Him to be an enemy. He has said to everyone: "Thou wilt have a value to Me when thou recognizest thine own worth." Thus, even though one knows that his own ending will be happiness, for example, he will not glory in that knowledge, because pride has departed from him. The prophets were humble, because they knew that God Most High is the Enemy of pride.

However, a devotee must not feel superior to a learned person, even if (that person) is not a devotee. (The devotee) should say: "Perhaps his knowledge will intercede for him and erase his wicked deeds."

And the Messenger (S) says: "The superiority of the scholar over the devotee is like my superiority over one of my helpers or

Companions." If one sees an ignorant person and his state is veiled, one says: "Perhaps he is more worshipful than I, but he has not made himself known." If he is a mischief-maker, one must say: "Many sins of wicked thoughts and evil desires that pass through my soul are worse than that open fornication. There are sins within me that I ignore by which all of my overt acts may be rendered without reward, and within him (there may be) a nature which will atone for of his sins. Moreover, perhaps he will repent and attain a good ending, while I may commit a mistake that will imperil my faith at the moment of death."

To summarize, since it is permissible that one's name be among the wicked in the view of God Most High, arrogance is a kind of ignorance. For this reason, the saints, scholars, shaykhs have always been humble.

Disclosing Conceit and Its Harms

Know that conceit is one of the reprehensible moral traits. The Messenger (S) called three things destructive: miserliness, passion, and conceit. He (S) said: "If ye do not commit sins, I fear that something come upon which is worse than sinning, and that is self-admiration." 'Ayishah (R) was asked: "When is a man an evildoer?" She answered: "When he thinks that he is a doer of good, and that thought is conceit."

Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "Perdition lies in two things: conceit and hopelessness." For that reason it has been said that he who is without hope is feeble in his quest, and the conceited is the same, for he supposes that he has no need of the quest. Mutarrif (R) says: "Every night I sleep and in the morning I am infirm and fearful. I prefer to spend the night in formal prayer and be pleased with myself."

One day, Bishr bin Mansur prolonged his formal prayer and someone was watching him at worship in astonishment. When (Bishr) had uttered the greeting of "peace" (which completes the formal prayer), he said: "Young man, be not astonished, for Iblis worshipped for a long time and thou knowest what his ending was."[1357]

And know that many calamities are born of conceit. One is the pride of considering oneself better than others. Another is that one does not recall his own sins, and he does not attend to those that he does recall. He thinks that he has been forgiven. There is no expression of gratitude in acts of worship; he thinks that he does not need that. He does not know the blemish upon worship, nor does he seek it out. And he thinks himself unblemished. Dread departs from his soul and (he thinks) himself safe from the stratagems of God Most High. He recognizes his

[1357] Iblis, the fallen angel, refused to prostrate himself before Adam and was thrown out of heaven to mislead mankind.

place close to God Most High as a right because of the worship—which is itself a blessing from God Most High upon him—and he lauds himself. Since he is conceited about his own knowledge, he asks no one; and should a person say something contrary to his opinion or desire, he does not listen and remains flawed. He will heed no one's counsel.

The True Nature of Conceit and Insolence

Know that whoever God Most High has granted comfort and blessings, such as knowledge, the grace of worship, etc., is anxious about the decline of those blessings and fears that they will be taken from him. This is not being conceited. Moreover, if one is not fearful and rejoices over them because they are a blessing and gift from God Most High, and not because of his (own) quality, he is still not conceited. If his joy is because of his own character and he neglects that it is a blessing from God Most High, and if he is devoid of terror for that, that joy in this respect is conceit. If, with that, he also thinks that he has some right over God Most High and he considers his worship an acceptable service, it is called insolence,[1358] because one thinks oneself a familiar entitled to take liberties.[1359] When he gives someone something, and there is some respect shown (to him) for that, he is pleased with himself in his heart. If, with all of this, he expects a service or a return, it is boldness.

And the Messenger (S) said: "The formal prayer of a person in which there is boldness does not pass beyond his head." And he (S) said: "If thou always smilest while firm in thine own shortcomings, it would be better if thou didst weep and considered that a deed."

Disclosing the Treatment for Conceit

Know that conceit is an illness and its cause is pure ignorance. Therefore, its remedy is pure spiritual knowledge. So, we say to the person whose nights and days are spent in worship and knowledge: "Thy conceit is from that which happens to thee, for which thou art the channel; or from that which comes into existence from thee and comes to

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[1358] "insolence" (*idlāl*): the word *idlāl*, rare in modern Persian, is an Arabic verbal noun of Form IV (usually transitive or causative) from the root *d-l-l*. In modern Arabic, it suggests "being coy, taking liberties, being proud and conceited." Among the relevant definitions given by Steingass, we find: "being arrogant, provoking, coquettish." Persian dictionaries also stress the flaunting, coquetry, etc., in addition to the meaning of insolence and boldness. ('Amid)

[1359] "a familiar entitled to take liberties" (*dāllati*): from the Arabic *dāllah* meaning "familiarity, chumminess, liberty that one takes with someone; audacity, boldness (Wehr). The Persian ending *ī* of *nisbah* makes an adjective or, as in this case, an abstract noun. Ghazzali is saying that the person considers himself entitled to a certain familiarity (with God) because of his worship. See preceding note also.

pass through thy strength. If (thy conceit) is from that which occurs to thee and for which thou art the channel, conceit does not befit a channel, for it is being used and the matter has nothing to do with it. Whose intermediary is it? If thou sayest: "What I do is with my strength and power," dost thou not know whence came this power, strength, will, and the organs by means of which thou functionest? If thou sayest: "It was my desire to perform this act," we say: "Who created this desire and this motivation? Who made it overcome thee so that it threw a chain of force around thy neck and set thee to work?"

An agent is sent to anyone who has been overcome by a motive so that he not be able to oppose it. The motivation is not his, but has been imposed upon him. Therefore, all is God's blessing and thy conceit is ignorance, for nothing is thine. Thine astonishment ought to be at the grace of God Most High who made many people heedless and their motives have been used up in bad deeds, but He sent to thee a delivery, through His Own care, and made the motive overwhelm thee and brought thee by the chain of force to His Own Presence."

If a monarch looks at his servants and bestows a robe of honor upon one among them all, without any reason or service that he had previously done, (the servant) must necessarily be astonished by the favor of the king who has singled him out without his deserving it, not at himself. Therefore, if he says: "The king is wise; if he had not seen a deserving quality in me, he would not have sent that special robe of honor to me," we say: "Whence didst thou bring that deserving quality? If it too is a gift of the king, there is no place for thy conceit. It is as though the king gives thee a horse and thou now become conceited. Then, he gives thee a slave and thou becomest conceited. Thou sayest: "He gave me the slave because I have a horse and the others did not." Since he had also given thee the horse, what room is there for conceit? Indeed, it is as though he gives them both to thee at one time." Likewise, if thou sayest: "He gave me the blessing of worship with that because I love Him," it is asked: "Who cast that love into thy heart?" If thou sayest: "I loved Him because I knew Him and ascertained His beauty," it is answered: "Who gave thee that knowledge and that view?" Consequently, since everything is from Him, conceit and pride in generosity and grace are His Who created thee. But thou art in between; thou thyself are no one. Nothing is thine, except (being) a channel for the power of God Most High, and that is all.

EXCURSUS: [QUESTION AND ANSWER]

If someone asks: Since I do not act and He does everything, from what can I hope for spiritual reward? There is no doubt that we have a spiritual reward for those of our actions that are by our free will.

The correct answer is that thou art a channel of power, and that is all. Thou art no one. *It was not thyself that threw (O Muhammad); but God threw* (Q. 7:17).[1360] That which thou hast done, thou didst not do. Rather, He did it. But, since He created motion after knowledge, power, and volition, thou imaginedst that thou did it. The mystery of this is very subtle and thou wilt not comprehend it. Perhaps there will be a reference to this in this book in the chapter on the Unity (of God) and Resignation (to the Will of God).[1361]

However, now suppose the limit of thine understanding is indulged and suppose that thy deeds *are* through thy power, yet thine action without power, volition, and knowledge is not possible. Therefore, the key to thine action lies in these three. Each one of them is a gift of God Most High. Thus, if there is a strongly-built treasury with its door firmly shut and in it, there are many blessings and comforts, but thou art helpless because thou dost not possess the key, the treasurer gives thee the key. Thou openest the door and extend thy hands and take up those blessings and comforts. Dost thou credit those blessings and comforts to the person who gave thee the key, or to the fact that thou puttest forth thy hands? Thou knowest that when he gave thee the key, extending the hands was not of much value. The value belongs to him who gave thee the key and the blessings and comforts were due to him. Therefore, be astonished at His favor! For, He has given thee the key to the Treasury of Devotion and has prohibited it to all libertines. He has given the others the key of sinning and shut fast the door of the Treasury of Devotion against them, without being treacherous with them. It is by His Own justice and without any service on thy part; rather, (it is) by His Own grace.

Therefore, whoever has come to know the true Unity will never harbor conceit. It is surprising that a poor man of reason would be amazed that He gives wealth to an ignoramus. "I am intelligent," he says, "(yet) He has deprived me (of wealth)!" He does not recognize that intelligence is the best of all blessings and this, too, *He* has given to him. If He had given both (wealth and intelligence) to him and deprived the other of both, it would not have been more just and perhaps that thoughtless person would complain. If it is said: "Exchange thine intelligence for his wealth," he will not do that. A poor, beautiful woman sees an ugly woman with many ornaments and adornments. She will say:

[1360] The Quranic passage from which this sentence is extracted concerns the battle of Uhud, AH3/625CE. The Prophet himself was wounded in it and its outcome ambiguous. The Prophet's courageous uncle, Hamzah, was killed along with about seventy other Muslims. The invading Makkans lost twenty men, but for some reasons did not pursue their advantage. Ghazzali uses the quotation for another purpose: as a refutation of the doctrine of free will.

[1361] See Chapter Eight of the Fourth Pillar.

"What kind of wisdom is this that He gives these blessings, which do not beautify her, to the ugly?" She does not know even this much: that that which He has given her is better. If He had given both to her, it would not have been more just. It is like a king giving a horse to one person and a slave to another. (The recipient of the horse) is astonished. He says: "I have the horse; why did he give the slave to another?" This is out of ignorance.

It was for this that David (A) once said: "O Lord God, no night comes during which there is not one member of the family of David performing formal prayer until daybreak, and no day comes during which there is not one (of them) who is fasting." A revelation came to him: "Whence came this favor for them if it was not My favor? Now I shall leave thee to thyself for a moment." When he was left to himself, he committed that error which he regretted and for which he was contrite the (rest) of his life.[1362]

Job (A) said: "O Lord God, Thou hast poured all of these calamities upon me and I have never chosen my desire over Thy purpose." Suddenly, a cloud appeared and he heard a cry from the cloud in ten thousand voices: "Whence came thy patience?" Job understood and poured a bit dust on his head and said: "O Lord God, it is from Thy grace." Then God Most High said: *Had it not been for the grace of God and His mercy unto you, not one of you would ever have grown pure. But God causes whom He will to grow pure, and God is All-hearing, All-knowing.* (Q. 24:21) "If it were not for My grace, there would be no way for anyone to his own purity, not to speak of others." And the Messenger (S) said about this: "No one achieves salvation through his own works." They asked: "Not even thou?" He replied: "Not even I; except by the mercy of God Most High." For this, the great of the Companions (R) used to say: "Would that we were dust, or that we did not exist." So, whoever understands this will not be conceited.

Excursus: [Conceit for Power, Beauty, and Ancestry Is Pure Stupidity]

Know that ignorance is appropriate for some who are conceited because of things which are not theirs and which have no connection to their power, such as strength, beauty, and ancestry. This is a more perfect ignorance. If a scholar or a devotee says: "I have acquired knowledge or I have performed worship," there is some room for his supposition. However, that itself is pure stupidity.

There is the person who brags about his pedigree of kings and tyrants. If he were to see them and what their condition is in hell and how

[1362] A reference to the story of David and Bathsheba.

they will be scorned by their enemies at the Resurrection, they would be ashamed of them. Indeed, there is no lineage more honorable than that of (Muhammad) Mustafa (S), but bragging about that is vain. The conceit of some has reached the point that they imagine that committing sins will not harm them and they do anything they please. They do not know even this much that since they act contrary to their fathers and grandfathers, they have cut off their own lineage. (The forefathers) would have known that honor lies in humility and piety, not in ancestry. There are also persons in their ancestry who are dogs in hell.

The Messenger (S) prohibited boasting of lineage and said: "All are the children of Adam, and Adam is (a child) of the dust." When Bilal made the call to obligatory prayer, the elders of the Quraysh demanded: "What right has that black slave to that position which has been given to him?" This verse was revealed: *Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most god-fearing of you.* (Q. 49:13) And when this verse was revealed: *And warn thy tribe of near kindred...* (Q. 26:214), (the Messenger) said to Fatimah (R): "O daughter of Muhammad, make thine own arrangements, for tomorrow my fatherhood of thee will have no benefit." And he said to Safiyah[1363] (R), his own paternal aunt: "O aunt of Muhammad, busy thyself with thine own affairs, for I shall not be able to help thee." If his relationship were sufficient for his relatives, Fatimah (R) would have been delivered from the trouble of devoutness so as to live well, and both worlds would have been hers. In a word, there is greater hope of his intercession for his kin.

However, it may be that the sins are such that intercession will not do. Not all sins are susceptible to intercession, as God Most High said: *And they cannot intercede for him except whom He accepts.* (Q. 21:28) Strutting about in the hope of intercession is like the sick person who does not abstain and eats as he pleased in the hope: "My father is a great physician." It is said that there are illnesses that become incurable and the skill of a physician has no profit. One's temperament must be such that the physician will be able to help it. Not everyone who goes to kings has an office and can intercede for all crimes. Indeed, a king will not accept intercession for a person to whom he is hostile. There is no sin that cannot be the cause of a grudge, for as God Most High has concealed His divine displeasure concerning sins, it may be that that which thou thinkest would be less important be the cause of (His) hostility, as God Most High said: *Ye counted it a trifle, but in the sight of God it was great.* (Q. 24:15) Ye thought it a trifle, but it was great to God Most High. There is the hope of intercession for all Muslims, but fear is

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[1363] Safiyah: the Prophet's aunt. She was the sister of his uncle Hamzah who was slain at the battle of Uhud. She took part in that battle and killed a Jewish spy during the war of the Trench at Madinah.

not banished with the hope of intercession and conceit does not assemble with fear. [*And God is More Knowing and Wiser.*]

CHAPTER TEN: CONCERNING HEEDLESSNESS, ERROR, AND DELUSION

Know that whoever remains deprived of the (spiritual) happiness of the Hereafter, it is because he did not travel the way. Whoever has not traveled the way, it is because either he did not know or he was not able. Whoever was not able, it is because he was the prisoner of carnal appetites or has not confronted his appetites. Whoever did not know, it is because he was heedless and uninformed, or he had lost the way, or—while still on the way—he fell off it due to some kind of vainglory.

As for that misery which arises from inability,[1364] we have discussed that. These folk are like the person who must travel a road on which there are many obstacles and hardships, but he is weak and cannot overcome the obstacles. The obstacles on the way (of faith) are (things) such as the appetite for rank, the appetite for wealth, and the appetites of the belly and the genitalia. We have discussed these appetites (above). There is the person who overcomes one obstacle, but is helpless at the second. There is the person who overcomes two, but is helpless before the third, and so forth. So long as not all of the obstacles have been put behind one, one does not reach the destination.

As for the misery that is because of ignorance, there are three kinds:

ONE (in Arabic) is heedlessness and (in Persian) unawareness, which are called (in Persian) "ignorance."[1365] He is like the person who sleeps on the road while the caravan passes him by. If someone does not awaken him, he will perish.

THE SECOND KIND (in Arabic) is error, which is called (in Persian) "being astray."[1366] Its similitude is that of the person whose destination lies to the east, but he turns to the west and proceeds. The farther he goes, the more distant he becomes (from his destination). This is called "extreme error." However, that which is going from left to right is also error, but not extreme.

As for THE THIRD KIND, it is (in Arabic) delusion, which is called (in Persian) "deception" and "vainglory."[1367] Its similitude is that of the

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[1364] "inability" (*nā tawānistan*): So the HK text. AA has "ignorance" (*nā dānistan*), but that is dealt with in the next paragraph, while the subject of this paragraph is based on the metaphor of physical effort. HK seems preferable here.

[1365] "heedlessness:": Ar. *ghaflat*; "unawareness": Per. *bī-khabarī*; "ignorance": Per. *nā-dānī*.

[1366] "error": Ar. *ḍalālat*; "being astray": Per. *gumrāhī*.

[1367] "vainglory" (*pindār*): The Persian word can mean "thought, imagination, fancy, opinion; pride, conceit, a high opinion of oneself." (Steingass) We use "vainglory" here for the reader's convenience to distinguish it from other forms of conceit being discussed

person who wishes to perform the Greater Pilgrimage. He will need pure gold in the desert. He sells whatever he has and exchanges it for gold, but the gold he receives is counterfeit or adulterated, however, he does not know that. He supposes that he has made his preparations and will achieve his objective. When he reaches the desert and offers his gold, no one will look at him. Regret and confusion remain in his hands. With regard to these people, God Most High has said: *Say: Shall We inform you who will be the greatest losers by their works? Those whose effort goes astray in the life of the world, and yet they reckon that they do good work.* (Q. 18:103-104) He said: "The greatest losers in the Hereafter are those who have taken trouble and who think that they have accomplished something. When they look, they have all been in error."[1368] The fault of this person is in that he should first have studied the business of money changing, then taken the money, so that he would be able to distinguish between the pure and the false. If he did not know money changing, he should have shown that gold to a moneychanger and then accepted it. If he did not do that either, he could have gotten hold of a touchstone.[1369] The moneychanger is like a spiritual guide and master who must be at the level of the spiritual guides, or with an experienced guide; he must show his affair to him. When he is unable to do either of these, his appetite is his touchstone: he knows that whatever his fancy, nature, and carnal appetite are drawn to is false.

Mistakes occur in this too, but usually the fact is that (this criterion) is correct. Therefore, ignorance is the first source of misery, and this is of three kinds. The particulars of each of these three and the treatment of each are a religious obligation of knowing. The first principle is learning of the way; after that, the traveling of the way. When both are learned, nothing remains. It is for this that (Abu Bakr) the Truly Righteous, (R) made a supplication concerning this shortcoming and said: *"Show us the truth as truth and enable us to follow it and show us the false as false and enable us to avoid it."* [1370]

So, we have called the previous principles "the Treatment of Inability"; now we shall discuss the Treatment of Ignorance."

Disclosing the Treatment of Heedlessness and Ignorance

Know that most people are veiled because of heedlessness. Indeed, ninety-nine in a hundred are thus. The meaning of heedlessness

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in this passage. Other terms given in the sentence are: delusion (Ar. *ghurūr*) and deception (Per. *fariftagī*).

[1368] Ghazzali's paraphrase of the preceding Quranic verse.

[1369] "touchstone" (*sang-i zar*): a stone, related to flint, formerly used to test the purity of gold and silver by rubbing the gold (or silver) on it. Good gold would leave a streak on it.

[1370] Ghazzali follows this Arabic sentence with a Persian translation omitted here.

is that they are not aware of the peril of the affair of the Hereafter. If they had knowledge of it, they would not sin. For, a human being has been so created that when he sees danger, he avoids it, even if it necessitates considerable trouble and effort. However, this danger can be seen by the light of prophethood or by the proclamations of prophethood that reach others, or by the proclamations of the religious scholars who are the heirs of the prophets. Why, there is no treatment for anyone who remains exhausted upon the way and falls asleep, save that an alert, compassionate person come to him and awaken him. This compassionate, wakeful person is the Messenger, and his representatives are the scholars of religion. All the prophets have been sent for this, as God Most High says: *That thou mayst warn a folk whose fathers were not warned, so they are heedless.* (Q. 36:6) And He said: *That thou mayst warn a folk to whom no warner came before thee, that haply they may walk aright.* (Q. 32:3) (God) says: "I sent thee who art Muhammad to awaken a people from the sleep of heedlessness and say to all: *Lo! man is in a state of loss!* (Q. 103:2) He created all at the edge of hell: *Then, as for him who rebelled and chose the life of the world, lo! hell will be his home. But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, lo! the Garden shall be his home.* (Q. 79:37-41)

Whoever has been brought into the world and takes to pursuing his lusts, and who turns to the world, shall fall into hell. His lust is like a straw mat that covers the top of the well of hell: whoever steps upon it will certainly fall into the well, but whoever has opposed his passion shall fall into heaven. The similitude of passion is that of an obstruction on the path to heaven: whoever overcomes it will certainly reach heaven. The Messenger (S) said about this: "*Heaven is surrounded by adversities and the fire (of hell) is surrounded by carnal passions.*"

Therefore, whichever of mankind is in the desert, such as the (desert) Arabs, Kurds, Turks, and their likes, among whom there are no religious scholars, will remain in the sleep of heedlessness because no one has awakened them and they themselves are unaware of the danger of the Hereafter. For that reason they do not travel the way. Those in the villages are like them, for scholars are rare among them, because the villages are like the grave, as in the Tradition: *The inhabitants of villages are the inhabitants of graves.*[1371] But those who live in a city in which the religious scholars and preachers do not ascend the pulpit to lecture, or the scholar of that town is busy with the world and not with the affairs of religion, also remain in heedlessness. For, the religious scholar is also heedless and asleep. How can he awaken others?

[1371] In Arabic, "villages" (*kufūr*, sing. *kafr*) half-rhymes with "graves" (*qubūr*). It is interesting to note that the root for *kufūr* (*k-f-r*) is the same for the same for "unbelief" (*kufr*) and "unbeliever" (*kāfir*). In modern Arabic, the more common word for "village" is *qaryah*.

And if the learned scholar of the city ascends the pulpit and holds assemblies, as is the custom of the barren remembrancers,[1372] he offers rhymed prose, incoherences, subtle conceits, promises of mercy, and blandishments that cause people to think that no matter what their nature is itself, they shall obtain (divine) mercy! The condition of these people is worse than that of the heedless! Their similitude is that of a sleeper on the roadside. Someone wakes him up and gives him some wine. He becomes drunk and falls down. Before that, this wretch was such that he could have been awakened easily at any sound he heard. Now he has become so that if he is kicked in the head fifty times, he himself will not obtain any awareness of it. He will say to whatever thou sayest to him: "O man! God Most High is generous and merciful. What harm do my sins do to Him? His heaven is more spacious than that there be no place for us in it," and other foolish prattle. This will take root in his mind. Whatever remembrancer is of this description, he is an affliction to religion and the people. He is like the physician who gives honey to a feverish sick person who is on the point of death and says: "There is a cure in honey." Honey cures a person whose illness is cold! Quranic verse and Traditions of hope and expectation of the mercy of God Most High are remedies, but only for two types of sick persons:

ONE (TYPE) is (the person) who commits so many sins that he has lost hope and, by reason of that loss of hope, does not repent. He says: "My repentance shall never be accepted." This verse is the cure for that: *Say: O My servants who have been prodigal to their own hurt! Despair not of the mercy of God, Who forgives all sins. Lo! He is Forgiving, the Merciful.* (Q. 39:53) The condition is that thou must recite this verse which follows it: *Turn to Him repentant, and surrender unto Him, before there come unto you the doom, when ye cannot be helped.* (Q. 39:54) He says to him: Do not lose hope, for God Most High forgives all sins when thou turnest back and repent; and thou followest that with: *the better of that which is revealed.* (Q. 39:55)[1373]

THE OTHER SICK PERSON is he whose fear has overcome him, so that he does not rest from acts of worship. It is to be feared that he will destroy himself through the excess of his efforts by not sleeping at night, eating inadequate food, and the like. The ointment for the injury of this fear is the Quranic verses of mercy. However, if thou sayest this to the heedless and the imprudent, it is like salt that thou sprinklest on a burnt

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[1372] "remembrancers" (*mudhakkirān*): those who lead group remembrance of God.

[1373] "*the better of that which is revealed*": a short-hand reference to the next verse, the complete text of which is: *And follow the better (guidance) of that which is revealed unto you from your Lord, before the doom comes upon you suddenly when ye know not.* (Q. 39:55)

person, and it increases the illness. Just as the physician who treats a hot sickness with honey is afflicting the patient, this scholar, too, afflicts the people's religion and is the companion of the Impostor[1374] and the friend of Iblis. Iblis does not enter any city where such a person is, for (that scholar) himself is (Iblis's) total proxy.

However, if the words of a preacher are in accordance with the Religious Law, fear-inspiring, and measured, but his behavior and activities are in contradiction to his speech and he is eager for the world; heedlessness does not come from his words either. He is like the person who takes a tray of sweetmeats[1375] before (others), eats them with total greed, and (then) cries out: "O people! Beware! Has anyone around here discovered that these sweetmeats are full of poison?" This causes the people to become more eager to eat them. They say: "He says that so that they will all be his and no one squeeze against him while he eats them." However, if both his actions and his words are in conformity to and of the type of the behavior and words of the forefathers, the heedless will be awakened from their sleep of heedlessness by his words—if he is accepted by the people. But, if they do not accept him, or some do not listen to his words, or people do not come (to hear them) and they remain in heedlessness, it is (one's) duty to go after them and go to their homes, as much as one is able, and invite them (to faith).

So, from all of this it is plain that ninety-nine out of a hundred people are in the sleep of heedlessness and unaware of the danger of the affair of the Hereafter. Heedlessness is an illness which the afflicted person cannot cure himself. The heedless person is unaware of his own heedlessness. How can he seek treatment? Therefore, the treatment is in the hands of the religious scholars. Children who wake up from the sleep of heedlessness are awakened by the words of (their) mothers, fathers, and teachers. Others are awakened by the words of a preacher. Since religious scholars and preachers have become scarce, the sickness of heedlessness has consequently become chronic. The people have remained sick with heedlessness. If the Hereafter is discoursed upon, it is done glibly and in the manner of an (old) custom. Inside, they are unaware of the pain of this suffering and the fear of this danger. In this, there is no benefit.

[1374] "the Impostor" (*dajjāl*): the name given to the religious charlatans and impostors (it is said that they will number about thirty) who will appear in the world. The last will be the one who is called the Antichrist in Christian tradition. (Hughes)

[1375] "sweetmeat" (*lawzīnah*): a confection made with almonds.

Disclosing Error and Losing One's Way, and Their Treatment

Know that there is another group who neglect the Hereafter, but they hold a belief which is contrary to the truth and they have fallen from the way of God. This loss of the way is their veil (between them and God). We shall offer five examples in order to make this plain:

THE FIRST EXAMPLE is that some deny the Hereafter and have come to the belief that when a human being dies, he becomes non-existent, as grass becomes dry, or as a lamp is extinguished. For this reason, they have thrown off the reins of shame and live as they please. They suppose that that which the prophets have said, they said for good of the people in this world, or in the quest for rank, profit, and adherents. Perhaps they declare openly that the talk about hell is like that which one says to a child: "If thou dost not go to school, thou wilt be put in a mouse hole." This wretch, if he were to glance at the likes of these would know that it is misfortune, for by reason of not going to school, the child will fall into that which is worse than a mouse hole. As the perspicacious have known, the misfortune of being veiled from God, may He be honored and glorified, is worse than hell and its cause is the pursuit of one's inclinations. Nonetheless, the denial (of the Hereafter) is agreeable to (human) nature and this has become dominant over the minds of many people concerning the end of the time, even though they do not express it in words. Perhaps, they also conceal it in themselves, but their acts and deeds demonstrate that their minds are thus, for in fear of a future hardship in this world they will endure hardships in the present. If they had a belief in the consequences (of the Hereafter), they would not treat it so lightly. The remedy for this is that the reality of the Hereafter be explained to them, and that is (accomplished) in three ways:

THE FIRST (WAY) is by witnessing heaven and hell and the conditions of the devotee and the rebels (against God). However, this is reserved for messengers and saints, for even if they are in this world, in that state which comes upon them—which is called annihilation and unawareness—they see the conditions of that world with their own eyes. The veil (which prevents) viewing that is the work of the senses and occupation with the carnal appetites. This has been referred to in the Prolegomena of this book. However, that is very rare. How would the person who does not believe in the Hereafter believe in that and where would he look for it? If he does seek it, when would he find it?

THE SECOND WAY is by becoming familiar with the evidence about what the reality of man is and what the soul is, so that it becomes evident that (the soul) is an essence established by itself and without need of a body. The body is its vehicle and tool, not its substance. With (the body's) annihilation, it does not cease to exist. There is a way for

this, but it is rare and difficult. The path of the religious scholars is rooted in knowledge. There has already been a reference to this in the Prolegomena of this book.

THE THIRD WAY is the method of the common folk. That is that the light of spiritual knowledge spread from the prophets and the saints and the upright in knowledge to the people who see them and converse with them. This is called faith. Whoever is not helped by the conversation with an experience spiritual guide or a humble scholar remains in misfortune. However greater the guide or scholar, the greater the faith spreading from his illumination. It is for this that the most fortunate of mankind were the Companions by virtue of the happiness of their observation of the states of Mustafa (S). Then (come) the Followers[1376] by virtue of their observation of the Companions. About this said the Messenger (S): "*The best of mankind are of my era, then those who came after them.*" These people are like the child who repeatedly sees his father flee from and abandon his home to a snake wherever he sees one. (The child) will necessarily come to believe that snakes are bad and that he should flee from them. It becomes his nature that wherever he sees a snake, he flees from it without knowing the reality of its harm. Perhaps, he will hear that there is a poison in it. He will know the name of poison, but not the reality of it.

The parable of the witnessing of the prophets (S) is that one sees a person who dies from being bitten by a snake. The snake bites another and he dies. The harm (of the snake) is made known by witnessing it. This is the ultimate belief. The parable of the proof of upstanding scholars is that it is unseen, but from a kind of analogy. The temperament of a human being and that of a snake are known, and the antipathy of one for the other is known. From this a certainty comes, but it is not the same as witnessing. The faith of all people, except for the great religious scholars, all derives from the spread of the association with the scholars and the great. This is the most proximate treatment.

THE SECOND EXAMPLE: The error when some people do not deny the Hereafter and do not definitely believe its non-existence, but they are perplexed by that and say that (the existence or non-existence of the Hereafter) cannot be truly known. Then, Satan places evidence before them so that they say that this world is certain, but there is doubt about the Hereafter. Certainty cannot be given to doubt. This is false, for the Hereafter is certain in the opinion of the people of certainty.

However, the treatment of this perplexity is that it be said: "The bitterness of the medicine is certain, the cure is doubtful. The danger of traveling by sea is certain, the profit of trade is doubtful." If someone

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[1376] "Followers" (*tābiʿīn*): the generation following the Companions of the Prophet.

says to thee when thou art thirsty: "Do not drink this water because a snake has put its mouth in it, the pleasure of drinking the water is certain, but the poison is doubtful, why dost thou abstain?" But thou sayest if the certain is passed up, the harm is sure. If the talk about the poison is true, one will perish. One cannot endure that. In the same way, the pleasure of the world is for no more than a hundred years. When it is over, it has become as a dream.

The Hereafter is eternal and one cannot play with eternal sorrow. If it is a lie, only think about how many days that thou were not in this world.[1377] As thou wert not in eternity without beginning, so thou art not in eternity without end. But, if it is true, thou wilt have escaped eternal punishment. It was about this that 'Ali (R) said to an atheist: "If it is as thou sayest, we will all have been saved; if it is not, we will have been saved, but thou wilt have fallen into hell."

THE THIRD EXAMPLE: Some people believe in the Hereafter, but they say that it is credit while the world is cash, and cash is better than credit. They do not know this much, that cash is better than credit when they are equal; but if the credit is a thousand and the cash one, credit for a thousand is better, as all transactions of the people are based upon this. This too is one of the errors, but a person does not know even this much.

THE FOURTH EXAMPLE: One has faith in the Hereafter, but when affairs are to his liking in this world and he finds the comforts of the world ready, he says: "Just as I am in comfort in this world, in that world too I shall be in comfort, for God Most High has given me these blessings because He loves me. Tomorrow, too, He will do the same; like the two brothers whose story is recalled in Chapter of the Cave (Q. 18) when one said: *'If indeed I am brought back unto my Lord, I shall surely find better than this as a resort.'* (Q. 18:36) And that other who said: *'I shall be better off with Him.'"* (Q. 41:50)

The treatment for this is that one should know of the person who has a dear child and a vile slave. He keeps the child a captive to school and the teacher's baton, while he leaves the slave to live as he wishes and does not worry about (the slave's) misfortune. If the slave imagines that he (gives him this freedom) out of his love and that (his master) loves him more than he does his son, it is stupidity. The custom is this, that God Most High withholds (the bounty) of the world from His saints and pours it upon His enemies. The similitude of his tranquillity and ease is the ease of the person who is lazy and does not sow seed. He certainly shall not reap.

[1377] That is, the time before your birth.

THE FIFTH EXAMPLE: That is that one say: "God Most High is Merciful and Generous, and He will not withhold heaven from anyone." This fool does not know that generosity and mercy are more than giving thee the means to throw one seed in the ground and reap seven hundred and, by those means, achieve eternal kingship. If this be the meaning of generosity and mercy—that one reap without labor—then why dost thou cultivate, do business, and seek a livelihood? Be patient and be idle, for God Most High is Generous and All-Powerful! He will cause plants to grow without seed and cultivation. Since thou dost not have faith in such generosity, even though He says: *And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof depends upon God,* (Q. 11:6) yet thou believest this about the Hereafter, even though He says: *And man has only that for which he has strived.* (Q. 53:6) That is the height of being astray! As the Messenger (S) says: *"The fool is he who follows his self and its inclinations and has expectations of God."*

Just as one who hopes for a child without marrying or who marries but does not engage in sexual intercourse, or who has intercourse but withholds his seed, is a fool—even though God Most High is Generous and able to create a child without sperm, the person who engages in intercourse and sows his seed and waits in the hope that perhaps God Most High will prevent harm and a child will come into being is the intelligent one. In the same way, he who does not believe, or believes but does not work prudently, and has the hope of salvation is a fool. What both of these do is hope for the grace of God, that He will restrain the bolts of lightning at the time of death so that he may carry his faith soundly (to the Hereafter). The latter one is intelligent and the former one is deluded.

Those persons who say that God Most High has treated us well in this world and He will treat us well in the next too, because He is Generous and Merciful, have deluded themselves about God Most High. God Most High has commanded caution from both, having said: *Lo! God's promise is the very truth. Let not the life of this world beguile you, nor let the deceiver beguile you, in regard to God.* (Q. 33:13) He says: "O mankind! The promises I have given are the truth; whoever does good shall see good, and whoever does evil shall see evil. Be careful, lest ye be deceived by the world! Be not deceived with respect to God Most High!"

DISCLOSING VAINGLORY AND ITS TREATMENT

Know that the vainglorious are despised. These are persons who have a good opinion of themselves and their works and are heedless of the harm of that (attitude). They do not distinguish between the base and

the pure,[1378] because they have not learned money-changing well, and they are deceived by color and appearance. Or, (they are) those persons who busy themselves with learning and worship and who have passed beyond the veil of heedlessness and going astray. Ninety-nine of a hundred of them are deluded. For this reason, the Messenger (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, Adam (A) will be told: 'Separate out those of thy children whose portion is hell.' He will ask: 'How many of how many?' They will answer: 'Out of every thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine.'" These are not those who will be in hell forever, but those for whom there is no cure but to pass through hell. They are the heedless, those who are in error, the self-deluded, and the prisoners of their own appetites, even if they were aware that they are guilty. The conceited[1379] are numerous and their categories are countless, but they can be divided into four classes: the learned, the worshipful, the Sufis, and the rich.

[The Categories of the Vainglorious]

The first category of the vainglorious is the learned. Some of them spend their time in learning and acquiring the sciences, but they fall short in their deeds and do not restrain their hands, tongues, eyes, and genitalia from the commission of sins. They imagine that because they have achieved some degree in knowledge that people such as they will not experience punishment, nor be held accountable for their deeds; rather, many people will find salvation through their intercession. They are like the sick man who studies the science of his illness, repeats it every night, writes a fine prescription, and knows the qualities of the medicine for the illness, but who never takes it and cannot tolerate the bitterness of the medicine. What profit does the repeated recitation of the qualities of the medicine hold for him? God Most High says: *He is prosperous who has cleansed himself.* (Q. 87:14) And He says: *But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, lo! the Garden shall be his home.* (Q. 79:37-41) (God) says that salvation is for him who has purified himself, not that one should learn the science of purification. The person goes to Paradise is he who opposes his inclinations. (God) does not say that the person who knows that he ought to oppose them (will go to heaven). And this simpleton, if his vain supposition arises from the Traditions that have come down about the virtue of knowledge, why does he not study those Traditions which have come down with respect to bad scholars who have been likened in the Quran to asses carrying a load of books on their backs, or to dogs? (The Messenger) says that the evil scholar will be tossed into

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[1378] A reference to good and false coin.

[1379] Ghazzali appears to be using "the vainglorious" (*ahl-i pindār*) and "the conceited" (*ahl-i ʿujb*) synonymously. See Note 1367.

hell so that his back and neck are broken and fire will roll about him. The inhabitants of hell will gather around him, (saying): "Who art thou and what is this punishment that afflicts thee?" He will say: "I am he who spoke but did not practice (what I spoke)"

The Messenger (S) said: "No one's punishment at the Resurrection will be greater than that of the learned scholar who did not act according to his own knowledge." Abu Darda(R) says: "Woe unto him who does not know, once; but upon him who knows but does not act upon it, seventy times. That is, his knowledge will be evidence against him."

SOME have committed no fault in learning or practice, but their external deeds have brought them to the point that they have neglected the purity of their souls. They have not exposed their internal bad characteristics, such as pride, envy, hypocrisy, office seeking, and ill feelings toward their peers and taking delight in their troubles and being sorrowful at their ease. They have become neglectful of those Traditions that say that (even) a little bit of hypocrisy is attributing partners to God; that the person who has one particle of pride in his heart shall not be admitted into heaven; that envy destroys faith as fire destroys wood; and that which says that God Most High does not look at your appearance—He looks into your souls.

Thus, these people are like the person who has sown something and cuts off the tops of the thorns and weeds which he should have uprooted from his field before they grew strong. He has left the roots in the ground; no matter how often he cuts them, they grow up again. The root of bad deeds is a bad character, and its source must be pulled out by the roots. Indeed, the similitude of that is that one have a filthy interior and an embellished exterior, like a privy, the outside of which has been plastered; or like a decorated grave the surface of which is painted while inside there is carrion; or like a dark house behind which a candle has been placed.

Jesus (A) likened a bad scholar in this manner, saying: "He is like a sieve from which flour falls while the chaff remains inside. Ye too speak of wisdom, but that which is bad stays inside you."

Others may have learned that this characteristic is bad and that one must avoid the bad and the soul must be kept pure of it, but they imagine that their own souls are devoid of it and that they are greater than that they should fall victim to such things. For, they better understand the knowledge of all this! When the sign of pride appears in them, their Satan says to them: "That is not pride. Rather, it is the quest for the honor of religion. If thou art not honored, Islam is not honored." If they don fine garments and keep horses, furniture, and ceremony, they say: "This is not vanity; it is the blinding of the enemies of the faith. For, the heretic innovators are blinded by the religious scholars' being well turned out."

They have forgotten the manner of living) of Mustafa (S), Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali, may God be pleased with them, and their threadbare clothes. They delude themselves into thinking that what those (personages) did was the lowering of Islam. Now Islam will become honored by their own adornment! If envy appears among them, they say: "This is the firmness of truth." If hypocrisy appears, they say: "This is what is best for the people, so that they recognize my devotion and imitate me." When they call upon rulers, they say: "This is not humbling (ourselves) before a tyrant, which is forbidden. Rather, it is for intercession for Muslims and for the good of their affairs." If they accept unlawful property, they say: "This is not forbidden, because this property has no owner. It must be used for the common welfare, and the common welfare of Islam is dependent upon me."

If one judges fairly and weighs (the matter), one knows that the welfare of religion is nothing more than that the people turn away from the world. Because of him, more people who have become desirous of the world than have turned away from it! Therefore, Islam is dependent upon his non-existence, and the welfare of Islam does not lie with him or the likes of him. This and the like of these vainglorious imaginings and conceits are false. We have discussed their treatment and true nature in the previous chapters; saying more would be prolixity. *Peace!*

ANOTHER GROUP have themselves made a mistake in the spirit of knowledge and the more important sciences, such as commentary, the Traditions, psychology, ethics, the way of austerity, and that which we have related in this book: the knowledge of the path to the Hereafter, and the aids and the banes of negotiating the way of religion and the way of guarding the soul. All of these are individual duties which they themselves may not have mastered and do not know that they are a part of the course of study. They may have spent all their time either in debate and dispute, in partisan theological discourse, or in issuing decrees about the people's worldly litigations. They spend all of their time in all of the studies which do not summon (the people) from this world to the Hereafter, or do not summon them from greed to satisfaction, or do not summon them from hypocrisy to sincerity, or do not summon them from heedlessness and smug security to fear and piety. They imagine that (what they have learned) is all there is to knowledge and that whoever turns to the others has turned away from science and forsaken it. A detailed explanation of these delusions is lengthy and we have discussed them in the book on Delusions in *The Revival*. It would not be possible to elaborate further in this book.

ANOTHER GROUP have busied themselves with the study of preaching, and their speech is all incomprehensible rhymed prose, verse, quaint sayings, and incoherences that they have strung together. Their object is to bring the people to clamoring and to singing their praises. They do not know even this that the reality of bringing people to the

remembrance of God is that the fire of suffering appear in their souls and that they see the danger of the affair of the Hereafter, so that they engage in the lamenting for this tribulation. Reminding and preaching are lamentations about this suffering. However, lamentations that are not mixed with grief and that use borrowed words have no effect upon the soul. The deluded among these folk are many, but the discussion of this would be lengthy.

ANOTHER GROUP have spent their time in the letter of religious jurisprudence and have not understood that the stricture of religious jurisprudence is nothing more than a law one observes by means of which the sultan governs the people. However, the knowledge of that which is related to the path of the Hereafter is something else. They imagine that everything which is correct according to the letter of religious jurisprudence will have profit in the Hereafter. The similitude of this is the person who sells his wealth subject to the poor rate to his wife and buys her property. The letter of the decision of the Law is that both properties are no longer subject to the poor rate; that is, it does not go to the ruler's tax collector when the latter comes for the payment. He will look at the appearance of ownership, and the ownership has been discontinued before the year is ended and he issues that decree. He does not know this much that the person who does such a thing for the purpose of avoiding payment of the poor rate will incur the wrath of God Most High, just as for the person who does not pay the poor rate. Miserliness is a destroyer and the poor rate is purification from the pollution of miserliness. It is the destroyer of miserliness that is to be obeyed, while this resorting to a deceit is obedience to miserliness. Thus, when miserliness has become obeyed in this, the destruction has been completed. How will one obtain salvation?

It is the same for the husband who takes to behaving badly with his wife in order to torment her into surrendering her dowry to him. According to the letter of a decree that is related to a judicial assembly, this quittance is correct, for the judge of this world knows the way of the tongue, not of the soul. However, in the next world he will be liable for that which is a quittance disliked (by God).[1380]

And just as making a request of a person in public so as to shame him is permissible according to the letter of a decree; (but) in fact, it is confiscation. There is no difference between his beating him with the

[1380] In Islamic the dowry is given by the husband to the wife, not by the wife or her family to the husband as is the European custom. Part of the dowry is often in the form of an obligation to be paid by the husband to the wife in the event of divorce. Unscrupulous husbands have been known to torment their wives in order to force them to renounce the dowry so that they may escape a difficult situation. This has an aspect of legality according to the letter of the law, but completely violates its spirit. The dowry was designed to protect the woman from destitution in the event of divorce.

whip of shame so that he surrender his property from the pain of that and that he openly beat him with a club and confiscate it.

These and their likes are numerous, because a person who knows naught except the letter of religious jurisprudence is in this vainglorious self-delusion, but he does not comprehend the inner spirit of religion.

THE SECOND CATEGORY is the worshipful and the devout; the vainglorious among them are many:

SOME are deluded in that they are held back from religious obligations by virtues, as the person who is anxious about purification and for that reason misses the time for obligatory formal prayer, but speaks harshly to his mother, father, and friend, or the one who harbors extreme suspicions about the uncleanness of the water (for purification). But, when a morsel comes to him, he imagines that everything is lawful. He may not avoid that which is manifestly forbidden yet not set his bare foot on the ground. He eats of the manifestly forbidden and forgets the behavior of the Companions, as when 'Umar (S) said: "I have withheld my hand from the lawful seventy times for fear that I would fall into the unlawful." Despite that, he purified himself from the pitcher of a Christian woman. Therefore, these people have brought the caution of food to (the level of) the caution of purification.[1381] It may be that he imagines that it is a tremendous sin[1382] if a person puts on a garment washed by a launderer.

The Messenger (S) put on clothing that had been sent to him by unbelievers, and the Companions would wear any clothing they obtained as booty from the unbeliever. No one has ever related that they put them in water. Indeed, they girded their waists with the weapons of the unbelievers and performed formal prayer and they would not say that the iron should be passed through water, or that they should be lacquered, or that they would not perform formal prayers with decorated skins. So, whoever has not been cautious with regard to his belly, or tongue, or his other organs, but exaggerates in these things, is the laughing stock of Satan. Indeed, he who performs everything and is wasteful in the use of water, or his prayer passes the beginning of its period, is also deluded. We have discussed the rules of these cautions in the Book of Purification.[1383]

[1381] That is, they have mixed up the strictures. The example of 'Umar cited shows that the lawfulness of one's sustenance is more serious than the minutiae of water for purification. Following their own desires, these people are lax in what they eat but strict in the details of purification.

[1382] "a great sin": because he cannot be absolutely certain about the garment's purity.

[1383] See Chapter Three of First Pillar.

ANOTHER GROUP are overcome by anxiety concerning the Declaration of Intention for the formal obligatory prayer so that they make noises and spread their hands and perhaps miss the first bow. They do not know even this much that the Intention for formal prayer is like the intention for paying a debt of the giving of the poor rate. None of them pays the poor rate twice or pays a debt twice because of anxiety about the intention.

For *ANOTHER GROUP* there is anxiety about the (pronunciation of) the letters of the (Quranic) chapter of *The Praise*,[1384] so as articulate (the gutturals and palatals). During the formal prayer, their hearts are engaged with that, that the articulation of the letters be correct. One should keep one's heart on the meaning, so that at the time of saying *al-ḥamdu lillāh*, (Q. 1:2)[1385] one's totality should become gratitude, and at *īyāka naᶜbudu wa-īyāka nastaᶜīn*, (Q. 1:5)[1386] one's totality becomes Unity and weakness, and at *ihdinā al-ṣirāṭa al-mustaqīm* (Q. 1:6)[1387] one's totality becomes humility and lamentation—while he, all of his soul is concerned with whether the articulation of *īyāka* is correct or not. If a person desires to make a request for something from a king, and he says: "*Ayyuhā-l-amīr*"[1388] repeatedly until he pronounces it correctly, there is no doubt that he would be deserving of (the king's) wrath and a slap.

SOME recite the entire Quran[1389] every day and recite it rapidly. While their tongues are racing, their souls are heedless. All of their motivation is in that they count for themselves how many complete recitations they have done. "Today I have read so many sevenths of the Quran." They do not understand that this Quran is an epistle written to mankind. In it, there are commands, prohibitions, promises, threats, parables, sermons, remembrances, terror, and warning. At a threat, one must become all fear; at a promise, one becomes all joy; at a parable, one becomes all credence; at a sermon, one becomes all ears; at something frightening, one becomes all alarm. These are all states of the soul. What is the benefit of the fluttering of the tip of the tongue? He is like the person to whom the king writes a letter and in it, there are orders. He sits, lifts it up, and reads it, but ignores the orders. What is the benefit?

SOME go on Pilgrimage and take up residence in the holy places. They fast, but do not do justice to the fast in guarding their souls and tongues. They do not do justice to Makkah in respecting its sanctity.

[1384] *The Praise (al-Ḥamd):* The first chapter of the Quran, more commonly known as *The Opening (al-Fātiḥah).*

[1385] "Praise be to God."

[1386] "Thee do we worship and Thee do we ask for help."

[1387] "Show us the Straight Path."

[1388] "*Ayyuhā al-amīr*": "O Prince!"

[1389] A complete recitation of Quran from beginning to end is called a *khatam* (conclusion).

They do not do justice to the way by seeking their provisions from the lawful. Their hearts are always with people whom they know from residing in the holy places. They say: "We have stood at so many stations and have been residing in the holy place for so many years." They do not know this much, that it is better that they be in their own homes desiring the Ka'bah than that be in the Ka'bah desiring that people know about one's residence in the holy place and being greedy for someone to give one something. With every morsel that one accepts, miserliness appears in him, for he fears that someone will take it from him or ask for it.

ANOTHER GROUP take up the way of asceticism, wear coarse clothing, eat little food, and are abstemious concerning wealth. However, concerning rank and popularity, they are not abstemious. The people give him gifts and they take joy from that. They keep their state prepared in sight of the people, but they do not know enough that rank is more harmful than wealth, and abandoning it is more difficult, for all sufferings are made easy with the hope of rank. An ascetic is one who abandons rank.

It may be that someone gives him something. He does not accept it, lest it be said that he is not an ascetic. If it is said to him: "Take the gift for appearances and then give it to a poor person," it is harder for him than killing him, even though it is from lawful things, because then people may suppose that he is not an ascetic. This! while he respects the wealthy more than he respects the poor, and he gives (the wealthy) more consideration! All of this is delusion.

ANOTHER GROUP perform all the visible acts so that, for example, they perform a thousand bows of formal prayer a day and thousands of glorifications. They are awake every night and fast every day, but they do not guard their souls in order to cleanse them from bad traits, and their inner selves are full of pride, envy, hypocrisy, and conceit.

Usually such people are ill-natured and frowning. They speak harshly with God Most High's people and, one might say, they are angry or at war with everyone. They do not know this much: that an ill nature voids all acts of worship and that the beginning of all acts of worship is a good nature. One would say that this wretch has placed the people in his debt through his acts of worship and he looks upon all with the eye of contempt. He keeps himself away from others until no person will of himself visit him. He does not know this much: that the chief of all worshippers and ascetics was Mustafa (S), and he was always more cheerful and more good-natured with everyone. He would seat whoever was the more shabbily clothed—so that the rest would gather their clothes away from him—next to himself him and take his hand. What fool is more foolish than he who holds himself superior to the master of the shop? What stupidity is greater than that when these simpletons practice the religion of Mustafa while acting contrary to his behavior!

THE THIRD CATEGORY is that of the Sufis. There is no delusion greater than that which prevails among them. For, however much the path is narrower and the goal more valuable, more error and delusion occurs. The beginning of Sufism is that three stages be mastered:

ONE is that one's self be conquered and that neither carnal appetite nor anger remain in it. It is not that they should be rooted out; rather, they should be subdued so that they cannot take any control over one, except in accordance with the (Religious) Law; as when a fortress is taken and its people not slain, but submit. The fortress of one's breast is in the same way conquered by the authority of the Law.

ANOTHER is that this world and that world have departed from one. The meaning of this is that one has retired from the world of sensory perception and imagining, because everything that comes in sensory perception and the imagination is shared with dumb beasts, and all are the portion of the appetites of the belly, the genitals, and the body. Paradise, too, is not beyond the world of sensory perception and imagination. Everything which admits of form and with which the imagination is concerned becomes to one like grass to the person who has gotten hold of almond cakes and roasted chicken: he has learned that that which comes from the imagination is contemptible, and the portion of simpletons. *And most of the inhabitants of heaven are the simple.*

THE THIRD is that one's totality is seized by God Most High and the majesty and beauty of the Divine Presence. This is that which no form, locus, perception, or imagination can affect. Indeed, to him the business for the imagination, sensory perception, and knowledge will be as sound for the eye and colors for the ear, of which they are necessarily unaware. When he reaches that point, he has reached the beginning of the abode of Sufism. Beyond this, there are for him the stations and states with God Most High, which are difficult to express in words, so that some explain the way of Sufism as unity and becoming one, while others explain it as possession. Anyone, whose foot is not planted firmly in knowledge and experiences this state, cannot put that import into words. Whatever he declares plainly resembles unbelief; however, to himself, it is truth. However, he does not have the power to put it into words. This is a marker of the way of Sufism.

Now look and see the delusion and vanities of others so that some of them know nothing more than patched garments, prayer rugs, and incoherent speech, which they have learned. The have taken the clothing, form, and externals of (the Sufis') behavior. Like them, they sit on prayer rugs with bowed heads and it may be that some devilish insinuation or fancy occur to them. They move their heads and suppose that this itself is their task. These people are like the helpless old woman who puts a cap on her head, dons a cloak, and girds herself with a weapon. She has learned how the fighters in the ranks strut and how they recite verses and epics. She has learned all of their movements. When

she goes to the sultan to have her name recorded in the roll (of warriors), the sultan is such that he does not look at appearances and apparel. He wants proof. He strips her so that she may fight with another warrior in the field. He sees a weak, unfortunate old woman. He commands that she be thrown under the feet of an elephant so that no one ever again has the gall to make light of the king's presence.

THERE ARE SOME who are worse, for they are incapable even of this. They maintain the external appearance and have threadbare clothing. They get hold of fine loin wrappers, brightly colored patches, and collyrium and put them on (the wrappers). They imagine since they have dyed the clothing, that is enough. They do not know that (the Sufis) have dyed their clothing dark[1390] because they were in a tribulation in faith and that the color blue-black[1391] was appropriate for that. This wretch is not so immersed (in his Sufism) so as not to wash his clothes, nor is he so overtaken by calamity as to have mourning clothes, nor is he so helpless that wherever there is a tear in his robe he (is not unable) to sew a patch on it to make it tattered. Indeed, he makes tears in new wrappers deliberately so that they will be patched. He still has not made his appearance conform to theirs, for the first wearer of tatters was 'Umar (bin) Khattab (R) who had sewn fourteen patches on his clothing, and some of those patches were leathern.

THERE ARE OTHERS of these people who are still worse. They cannot endure torn and mean clothing. They cannot endure performing the religious obligations and the abandonment of sins. They are not prepared to confess their own helplessness, for they are prisoners of Satan and their carnal appetites. They say: "The soul is important, not the exterior. Our souls are always engaged in formal prayer and with God. We do not have any need of these practices themselves, for that is for the struggle (against the self). It has been commanded for those persons who are the prisoners of their selves, but our selves are dead to us. Our religion has become two measures[1392] and does not become tainted with such things and does not alter." When they look at the worshipful, they say: "These are day laborers without pay." When they look at the religious scholars, they say: "These people have become bound to the Traditions and do not know the path to truth." Such people are deserving of execution and are unbelievers. The consensus of the people (of Muhammad) is that (shedding) their blood is lawful.

THERE IS ANOTHER GROUP who rise in service to the Sufis—the reality of service is that a person sacrifice himself for these people and he

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[1390] "dark" (*ʿūdī*): the color of aloes wood, nearly black.

[1391] "blue-black" (*kabūd*): usually a dark blue, but it shades to black. Names for colors are often less specific in Persian than they are in English. Clearly, in this context Ghazzali is indicating a similarity between *ʿūdī* and *kabūd*.

[1392] "two measures" (*dū qullah*): See Note 210.

sacrifices his wealth and totally forgets himself in the work of their love. When a person makes of them a landed estate from which, because of them, he obtains wealth, he makes them his own followers so that his fame in (their) service spreads outside and the people hold in him high regard. He takes from anywhere—the lawful or the unlawful—and gives (of that) to them so that his business not be spoiled and it remain hidden that he is deluded and deceived.

THERE ARE OTHERS who follow the way of asceticism completely and subjugate their carnal appetites. They give the totality of themselves to God Most High and sit in seclusion remembering (God). Their states begin to show themselves so that they obtain information of anything they desire. If they commit a lapse, they undergo chastisement. It may happen that they begin to see the angels and the prophets well, in likeness and in form. It may happen that they see themselves in the heavens, for example, and that they see the angels. The true nature of this, even if it is correct, is that it is like a dream which is correct and true, but that comes to a sleeper in the imagination, while this comes to the imagination of the conscious person. He is deluded by that vision, so that he says: "Everything that is in the seven heavens and seven climates was shown to me many times!" They suppose that this (vision) itself is the ultimate goal of the saints, yet he himself has not yet understood one hair of the wonders of handiwork of God Most High in (His) creation. He imagines that whatever is in existence is that which has been disclosed to him. When this state appears, he imagines that he has achieved perfection and he engages in rejoicing for this and does not search further. Perhaps that self which had been subdued begins to reappear gradually, while he himself imagines that since such things have been shown to him, he is safe from his inner self and has achieved perfection. This is an enormous delusion. Indeed, one cannot trust any of this. One can trust him whose nature changes and becomes obedient to the Law so that in him no trait retains any power within him.

Shaykh Abu al-Qasim Gurgani has said that there is nothing miraculous in walking on water, flying through the air, or giving information about the unseen. A saintly miracle[1393] is that a person become command entirely; that is, his totality becomes obedience and command, so that nothing forbidden touches him. This is appropriate for confidence. However, it is possible that all of the other is from Satan, for Satan too has knowledge of the unseen. Those who are called soothsayers are given information about many matters, and strange things affect them. Confidence is in this, that he and his necessity depart and the (Religious) Law take its place.

[1393] "miracle" (*karāmat*): *karāmat* is a miracle performed by a saint or a prophet as opposed to *muʿjizah*, which is a miracle performed by God.

If thou cannot sit upon a lion, have no fear; when thou hast cast underfoot and subdued that dog of rage which is in thy breast, thou will have sat upon a lion. If thou cannot give information of the unseen, have no fear; when thou hast understood the faults and delusions that are from the self and hast become aware of their harm and falseness, thy (knowledge of thy) fault is thine unseen; thou will have obtained information from the unseen. If thou cannot to walk upon water or fly in the air, have no fear; when a halting place appears for thee beyond sensory perception and imagination and thou hast walked upon it, thou will have walked upon water and flown through the air. If thou cannot cross the desert in one night, have no fear; when thou hast traversed the valleys of the world and put the workhouse of the world behind thee, thou will have crossed the desert. If thou cannot place thy foot atop the peak of a great mountain in one step, have no fear; for if thou hast put thy foot on a single dram of the doubtful,[1394] thou will have passed the Ascent that God Most High has so called in the Quran, as He said: *He has not attempted the Ascent; Ah! What will convey unto thee what the Ascent is!* (Q. 90:11-12)[1395] These are some of the delusions of these people, but a complete discussion of them would be prolonged.

THE FOURTH CATEGORY is the powerful and the lords of wealth. There are many of the conceited and the self-deluded among them. They spend money on mosques, hospices, and bridges, but it may be that they have earned (that money) unlawfully. It is a religious obligation to give the money to its rightful owners. They build so that their sins are increased and they imagine that they have accomplished something!

SOME spend of lawfully acquired money in construction, but their purpose may be hypocritical. If they spend a dirham or a dinar, they want their names stamped upon the fired bricks. If it is said: "Do not write (thy name on the bricks), or write a different name," God Most High knows that he who has done this cannot stand hearing this. The sign of this hypocrisy is that there may be in his vicinity or neighborhood some poor people who are in need of a loaf of bread. He cannot give it to them, even though doing so would be better, for "*So-and-so built this, may God lengthen his life*" cannot be inscribed upon fired bricks in his forehead.

THERE ARE SOME who spend from lawful money in sincerity, but upon decoration and ornaments. They imagine that such works are good,

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[1394] "the doubtful" (*shubhat*): the uncertainty about the lawfulness (*halāl*) or the unlawfulness (*ḥarām*) of some thing or act.

[1395] The Quranic passage then explains what the Ascent is: *It is to free a slave, and to feed in the day of hunger an orphan near of kin, or some poor wretch in misery, and to be of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to pity.* (Q. 90:13-17)

but two iniquities come from this: one is that the people's souls while at prayer are distracted and lose their humility. The other is that they may desire the same in their homes too and the world may become attractive in their eyes; (this), while they think that they have accomplished something.

The Messenger (S) has said: "When a mosque is adorned and the Scripture is embellished with gold and silver, may it be destroyed upon your (heads)!" and the flourishing of mosques is by (means of) present, submissive, and humble souls. Perhaps, one has been disgusted by the world. Whatever (in the mosque) detracts from humbleness and embellishes the world in the soul is the destruction of the mosque. This simpleton destroys the mosque while supposing that he has performed a great deed!

THERE ARE SOME who like the poor to gather about their doors so that the activity may be known in the city; or, they give voluntary charity to persons who are glib tongued and well known; or, they spend upon a group who are to spend it on the way to perform the Pilgrimage; or, they give it to a dervish hospice so that all will know of it and thank them. If it is said that it would be better for thee to spend it on the deserving rather than on journey of the Pilgrimage, he cannot (do that) because his pleasure lies in the praise and gratitude of those people. He imagines that he is doing a good deed.

Someone consulted with Bishr Hafi: "I have 2,000 lawfully gained dirhams. I want to perform the Pilgrimage." (Bishr) said: "Dost thou go to sightsee or to please God Most High?" He answered: "To please God." (Bishr) said: "Go and give (the money) to debtors, orphans, those who have families; for that comfort which thou deliverest to the Muslims is better than a hundred Pilgrimages after the Pilgrimage of Islam."[1396] Then the man said: "I find the desire for the Pilgrimage greater in myself." (Bishr) said: "Thou didst not obtain this money for that purpose. Until thou spendest it to no purpose, thy self will not settle down."

SOME are themselves so miserly that they give nothing more than the poor tax. Then, they give that poor tax and the tenth to persons who are in their service, such as teachers and students so that their magnificence will remain in place with their assembling (about them); as the instructor who gives the poor tax to his own students, but if they leave him, he does not. This is in lieu of performance, and he knows that he gives it in exchange for (the receiver's) apprenticeship. He imagines that he has paid the poor tax. Perhaps, he gives it to persons who are continually in the service of great lords and, through (the lord's)

[1396] "the Pilgrimage of Islam" (*Hajj-i Islām*): the Pilgrimage which is incumbent upon every able-bodied Muslim who has the means once in his or her life. The assumption of the discussion is that the man has already fulfilled that obligation.

intercession, he gives the poor tax to those persons so that (the lord's and the servants) will be obligated to him. With this amount of the poor tax money, he desires to satisfy a number of goals. Perhaps, they also have expectations of gratitude and praise; and they give the poor tax!

SOME are themselves so miserly that they do not even pay the poor tax. They keep their wealth and claim to be devout. They perform formal prayer at night and fast during the day. They are like the person who has a headache and applies the medicine to his heels. This promise-breaker does not understand that his illness is miserliness, not overeating; and its treatment is spending, not enduring hunger. This and its like are the delusions of lords of wealth. No class of these will be saved unless they acquire knowledge—such as that which is in this book—in order to recognize the harm to devotion, the delusions of the self, and the deceit of Satan. Then, the love for God Most High will triumph over him and the world will depart from him, except that amount which is necessary. He will have set his death before him and will engage in nothing save the preparation for that. This is easy for whomever God Most High and Sanctified has made it easy. *Peace! [May God grant us success in that which Thou lovest and approvest.*

The Book of the Destroyers of the Alchemy of Happiness has been completed. Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds, and may the blessings of God be upon Muhammad and his family and the righteous Companions.] [1397]

[1397] The additional ending in Arabic between the brackets is from the AA text. HK concludes with "*Peace!*"

THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

by IMAM GHAZZALI

[*In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate*]

THE FOURTH PILLAR:

CONCERNING THE DELIVERERS

In this Pillar, there are also ten chapters:

THE FIRST CHAPTER: Concerning Repentance
THE SECOND CHAPTER: Concerning Patience and Gratitude
THE THIRD CHAPTER: Concerning Fear and Hope
THE FOURTH CHAPTER: Concerning Poverty and Asceticism
THE FIFTH CHAPTER: Concerning Truthfulness and Sincerity
THE SIXTH CHAPTER: Concerning Reckoning and Guarding
THE SEVENTH CHAPTER: Concerning Meditation and Regret
THE EIGHTH CHAPTER: Concerning Trust and the Unity of God
THE NINTH CHAPTER: Concerning Love and Zeal
THE TENTH CHAPTER: Concerning Death and the States of the Hereafter

CHAPTER ONE: CONCERNING REPENTANCE

Know that repentance is returning to God Most High. It is the first step of the disciples and the beginning of the path of the Wayfarers. No human being can escape this; for, being completely free of sin, from the beginning to the end, is the work of angels. Being immersed in sin and transgression all one's life is the occupation of Satan, but turning back from the way of sin to the way of devotion by means of repentance is the work of a human being and of mankind. Whoever has made reparations for his past shortcomings with repentance has established his lineage to Adam. Whoever has stubbornly persisted in sin to the end of his life, has established his lineage to Satan. However, it is not possible for a person to spend his entire life in devotion, as he was created at the beginning deficient and without intelligence. First, carnal appetite, which is the tool of Satan, was put in control over him. That intelligence which is the enemy of passion and is the light of the essence of the angels was created after the establishment of the carnal appetite (in him) and its seizing the fortress of the breast in conquest. The self became accustomed to and familiar with it. Then, when intelligence necessarily appeared, there was a need for repentance and the exertion to retake that fortress and to drive Satan out. Therefore, repentance is necessary for human beings and it is the first step of the Wayfarers, following the awakening that results from the light of reason and religion. So long as one does not distinguish that path from the paths of error and going astray, there is no religious obligation except repentance, which means the turning back from the paths of error and going astray, and returning to (True) Path.

The Virtue and Spiritual Reward of Repentance

Know that God Most High has commanded all believers and all mankind to repentance and has said: *And turn unto God together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed.* (Q. 24:31) He has commanded that whoever holds the hope of success (in the Hereafter) must repent. The Messenger (S) has said: "The repentance of whoever repents before the sun rises in the west[1398] is accepted." He said: "Do not stand where the people pass, called the place of boasting, for there is the person who stands there and laughs at whoever passes him. He says unseemly things to every woman who comes by. He will not rise from the place until hell

[1398] "the sun rises in the west": one of the signs of the end of the world.

becomes obligatory for him, unless he repents." And the Messenger (S) said: "I repent seventy times a day and seek forgiveness."

And he said: "Whoever has repented for his sins, God Most High causes his sins to be forgotten by the angels who have recorded them against him and to be forgotten by his hands, feet, and the place where he has sinned, so that when he comes to God Most High they will not bear witness against him." And he said: "God Most High accepts the repentance of His servant before his soul reaches his throat and becomes a death rattle." And he said: "God Most High has spread open His Hand for the person who sins during the day and repents before night and who sins during the night and repents before day. He accepts (repentance) until that time when the sun shall rise in the west."

'Umar Khattab (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "Repent, for I repent a hundred times a day." And (the Messenger) said: "There is no human being who has not sinned, but the best of the sinners are the repenters." And he said: "Whoever repents of his sins is like the person who has never committed a sin." And he said: "Repentance of sins is that one never return to them." And the Messenger (S) said: "O Ayishah, *Lo! As for those who sunder their religion and become schismatics, no concern at all hast thou with them.* (Q. 6:159) They are heretics.[1399] There is repentance for all who have sinned, except the heretics. There is no repentance for them. I loathe them and they loathe me."

And he said: "When Abraham (A) was carried to the sky, he saw a man committing adultery with a woman (on the earth). He supplicated to God for them that they be destroyed. He saw another committing a sin and offered a supplication for him. Then, he received a revelation: 'O Abraham, let my servants achieve a result from one out of three deeds: If he repents, I shall accept it; if he asks for forgiveness, I shall forgive him; or he will have a child who will worship Me and I shall make him useful for (the father). Hast thou not learned that one of My Names is the Patient?'"

And 'Ayishah (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High has not learned of the regret of any of his servants for a sin that He has (already) forgiven him before he asks for forgiveness." And he said: "There is a doorway in the west, its breadth is the journey of seventy years. It is flung open for repentance. It has been open from the day the heavens and the earth were created and shall remain open until the sun rises in the west." And he said: "On Mondays and Thursdays, deeds are displayed. (The repentance of) anyone who has repented is accepted; whoever has sought forgiveness shall be forgiven. But the persons whose souls are full of pride will continue as they were." And he (S) said: "The

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[1399] "heretics" (*ahl-i bid'at*): or "innovators" in religion.

repenter is beloved by God. Whoever repents, it is for him as though he had not sinned."

And he said: "God Most High is more pleased at His servant's repentance than the Arab in the desert who, when he lays his head down and falls asleep, has a camel upon which all provisions, food, and water are loaded. When he wakes up, he does not see the camel. He goes and searches much until it is to be feared that he will perish of hunger and thirst and his living soul depart from him. He says: 'I shall go back to where I was and lie on the ground until I die.' He comes to that place and lays his head on his forearm hopelessly until he should die. In that misery, he falls asleep. When he awakens, he finds that his camel has returned safely and is standing by his head with the load of provisions and saddle on its back intact. He wants to express his gratitude and he says: 'O my God, I am Thy servant,' but from joy his tongue errs and he says instead: 'O Thou my servant, I am Thy god.' God Most High rejoices more at the repentance of His servant than that servant at the finding of his camel and food."

The True Nature of Repentance

Know that the beginning of repentance is the appearance of the illumination of spiritual insight and faith, for in that light it is seen that sin is a fatal poison. When one understands that one has consumed much of that poison and is approaching destruction, regret and alarm necessarily appear in one. When a person learns that he has consumed poison, he becomes regretful and is frightened. Out of regret, he inserts his finger into his throat in order to induce vomiting. Because of that alarm, he arranges for the medicine that will counter the effect of that poison in order to expel it from himself. It is the same when he comprehends that every carnal appetite to which he has given rein is like honey in which there is a poison. It is sweet for the moment, but stings in the end.

In him, regret appears for the past. A fire from the fire of fear ignites within his soul. He sees his own destruction in that fire of fear. The greed and appetite for sinning is burned up within him and the carnal appetite is transformed into regret. He determines to make up for the past and also not to return to that in the future. He tears off the garments of injustice and spreads the carpet of faithfulness. He alters all of his movements and his rests. Before, all was merriment, wantonness, and heedlessness; now he is all weeping, sorrow, and regret. Before, all of his companionship was with the heedless, now it is with the spiritually insightful. Thus, the essence of repentance is regret. The corollaries are the transformation of states and the removal of all his parts from sin and transgression to devotion and assent.

Disclosing That Repentance Is a Duty Incumbent Upon Every Person and at All Times

As for repentance's being a duty incumbent upon every person and at all times, thou recognizest that because every person who has attained puberty and has been an unbeliever is required to repent for his unbelief (when becoming a Muslim). If he be a Muslim and holds that faith in imitation of his mother and father, he confesses it with his tongue, but neglects it in his heart. It is a requirement that he repent of that neglect and do what he should so that his heart be made aware and gain knowledge of the true nature of faith. We do not intend by this awareness that he master the proofs, as are stated in scholastic theology —that is not incumbent upon everyone; rather that the power of faith become the conqueror and master of his soul so that only its precepts remain to him. He possesses the precepts at that time when all that occurs in the kingdom of his body, all are by the command of faith, not by the command of Satan. Whenever there is a sin, faith is imperfect. As the Messenger (S) said: "A person committing adultery is not a Muslim at the time of the adultery. (A person) stealing is not a Muslim at the time of the theft." He does not intend that (a Muslim)) is an unbeliever in that circumstance, but that there are many branches and limbs for faith. One of these branches is that one know that adultery is a fatal poison. If one knows that he is drinking poison, he does not drink. Therefore, in that circumstance, the power of carnal appetite has routed his faith because adultery is a Destroyer, so that faith has vanished through that heedlessness, so that the smoke of the darkness of doubt has cloaked the light (of faith).

Now, thou hast understood that repentance first for unbelief is a duty. If one is not an unbeliever, (one must repent) for habitual and imitative faith. So, even if thou hast done this, usually one is not free of sin: repenting for that is a duty. Even if one is devoid of sin externally, internally one is not devoid of the seeds of those sins such as the greed for food and drink, the greed for talk, the love of wealth and rank, envy, pride, hypocrisy, and the like of those Destroyers. All of these are betrayals of the soul and are the roots of sins. One must repent of all of these so that each one is cut off by the sharp edge of moderation. One must make that appetite obedient to the intellect and the Law, and this is accomplished with lengthy striving.

And even if one is devoid of that, one is not devoid of evil insinuations, the whisperings of the self, and unfulfillable fancies. Repenting for all of them is a duty. And even if one is devoid of those, he is not also devoid of the neglect of the remembrance of God Most High in some circumstances. The root of deficiencies is the forgetting of God Most High—even if just for a moment. One must repent for that too. And

if, for example, it happens that one is always meditating and remembering (God), and one is never free of meditation and remembrance, there are still different and varied stations; each one of those is deficient with respect to the ones above it. Satisfaction with a deficient level when one more perfect is possible is being shortchanged and a loss. Repentance for that is a duty.

That which the Messenger (S) said: "Every day I repent and ask forgiveness seventy times," may have been because his work was continually progressing and increasing. At every foothold that he reached, he would see a perfection which had been abridged in the previous place. He would seek forgiveness for the previous step and repent. For, if a person does some work from which he is able to get a dirham, when he gets it, he is happy. But, if he knows that he could have gotten a dinar for that while he had been satisfied with a dirham, he becomes sad and is put to shame so that when he does receive a dinar he rejoices and supposes that there is nothing beyond that. When he has learned that he would have been able to get a jewel worth a thousand dinars, he again is put to shame and regrets his own fault, and he regrets it and repents. For this, it has been said: "*The good deeds of the pious are the bad deeds of the nearest to God.*" The perfection of the pious is deficiency with respect to the saints, for which they ask forgiveness.

QUESTION: If someone asks: When one has repented for unbelief and sin, repenting for heedlessness and shortcomings in attaining greater degrees is one of the virtues, not one of the religious obligations. Why didst thou say that this repentance is also a necessary duty?

THE ANSWER is that there are two kinds of necessary duty:

ONE (DUTY) is that which we call, according to the level of the common folk, the external aspect of the decree: that amount in which they engage so that the world not be ruined and they attend to a worldly livelihood. That is what will save them from the punishment of hell.

THE SECOND DUTY is that which the common folk do not have the strength to endure. Anyone who does not perform this is saved from the punishment of hell, but not from the punishment of the regret for what is above him. For, in the Hereafter, he will see some above him, as he sees the stars in the sky (in this life). That feeling of missing something and the regret that will come upon him will be a punishment. That repentance of which we spoke is a necessary duty to escape this torment. Just as we often see in this world, when one of (our) peers receives a higher degree, the world becomes constricted and gloomy for another from the feeling of being shortchanged and because of envious regret. It is as though a fire were kindled in his soul, even though he may have achieved deliverance from the punishment of being beaten with sticks, having his hand cut off (for theft), or the confiscation (of his property). It is for this reason that the Day of Resurrection is called the Day of Mutual

Defrauding,[1400] for no one is completely free of a sense of being defrauded: the one who had not been devoted (to God) for not (devoting himself to God), and the one who devoted himself to God for not doing even more.

It was for this reason that the way of the prophets and the saints was that they demonstrate devout obedience to God, insofar as they were able, and not stint in that, saying: "This is so that there not be the regret for shortcomings tomorrow."[1401] What dost thou say to the Messenger's (S) keeping himself hungry?—he knew that eating bread is not forbidden—until 'Ayishah said: "I placed my hand on his stomach and I pitied him. I wept and said: 'Let my soul be thy sacrifice! What would happen if thou ate your fill of the food of this world?' He replied: 'O 'Ayishah, my brothers, the Resolute,[1402] have gone before me, seen miracles, and received robes of honor. I fear that if I receive the portion (of my reward) in this world, my degree will be less than their rank. I prefer being patient a few days to losing that which my brothers have."

Jesus (A) had lain down, having placed a stone under his head (as a pillow). Iblis said to him: "Now that thou hast not abandoned the world, art thou sorry?" (Jesus) said: "What have I done?" The devil said: "Thou hast put a stone under thy head and have enjoyed its comfort." Jesus (A) tossed the stone aside. He said: "I have left this as well to thee with the world." The Messenger (S) had put on new shoe straps, but because they appeared good to him, he ordered that the old ones be brought back and put back on the sandals, removing the new ones. When (Abu Bakr), the Truly Righteous, took a drink of milk he realized that there was something doubtful in it. He thrust his finger down his throat (to induce vomiting) until it was feared that he would bring up his life[1403] with that (milk). What dost thou say? Did he not know that according to the common religious opinion, this was not a necessary duty? But the common religious opinion is one thing and the danger which the truly righteous may perceive another. They are the most knowledgeable of mankind with respect to God Most High and the perils of the Way of God. Do not suppose that they had imposed these pains upon themselves frivolously! Follow their example and do not cling to the common religious opinion, which is another story.

[1400] "the Day of Mutual Defrauding" (*rūz-i taghābun*): The more usual translation of the phrase is "the Day of Judgment," but I have given a more literal translation in accordance with the point Ghazzali is making, that there will be a sense of loss and missed opportunities at the Resurrection.

[1401] "tomorrow": the Hereafter.

[1402] "my brothers, the Resolute (*ūlū al-ʿazm*)": the prophets and messengers who had preceded Muhammad (S).

[1403] "it was feared that he would bring up his life": that is, that he would die. The "doubt" referred to concerns legality, not contamination.

So, from all this thou hast learned that a servant (of God) is never without the need for repentance. It was regarding this that Abu Sulayman Darani (R) says: "If a person weeps for nothing other than the time he has lost, to this extent, this sorrow itself is enough until the time of death. So, what dost thou say about a person who wastes the future as he has wasted the past?" Know that anyone who has a precious jewel and loses it has a right to weep, and if the loss of that also becomes the cause of calamity and punishment, the weeping increases. Every breath is a jewel by which one can hunt eternal happiness. When a person spends it in sin so that it becomes the cause of his destruction, what would his state be if he learned about that suffering? But, that is a suffering that he will learn about when regret will have no profit.

About this God Most High says: *And spend of that wherewith We have provided you before death comes unto one of you and he says: 'My Lord, if only Thou wouldst reprieve me for a little while, then I would give alms and be among the righteous.* (Q. 63:10) It has been said that the meaning of this verse is that the servant (of God) sees the Angel of Death at the time of death. He knows that it is the time of going. Infinite regret descends upon his soul. He says: "O Angel of Death! Give me one day's grace so that I may repent and beg forgiveness." (The Angel of Death) says: "There were many days before. Now, thy life has come to an end and nothing of it is left." (The person) says: "Give me one hour's grace!" (The angel) replies: "The hour has come, not one hour is left." When he tastes this draught of hopelessness, the foundation of his faith begins to tremble. If, *God forbid*, in eternity, his ending has been made in adversity, he will depart this world in doubt, anxiety, and wretchedness. If it has been made in happiness, he shall carry the foundation of his faith.[1404]

About this, said God Most High: *Forgiveness is not for those who do bad deeds until, when death presents itself to one of them, he says: 'Lo! I repent now.'* (Q. 4:16) It has thus been said that God Most High has two secrets for each of His servants: one is that at the time that he comes out of his mother's womb, God Most High says: "I have created thee pure and prepared, and I have given thee thy life in trust. Be alert as to how thou dost return that trust to Me at the time of thy death." The other secret is that at the time of death, God Most High says: "My servant! What hast thou done with that which I entrusted to thee? If thou hast preserved it dutifully, thou shalt obtain thy reward for that; but if thou hast wasted it, prepare thyself! Hell is awaiting thee!"

[1404] That is, if he was predestined to die in adversity or happiness, the results would be so.

DISCLOSING THE ACCEPTANCE OF REPENTANCE

Know that when repentance is according to its rules, it will certainly be accepted. When thou hast repented, do not be in doubt about its acceptance. Be in doubt as to whether thy repentance was according to rule or not.

Whoever has understood the true nature of the human soul and what the manner of its connection to the body is, its relationship to the Divine Presence, and what the cause of the veil between it and the (Divine Presence) is, one does not doubt that sin is the cause of the veil and repentance is the cause of acceptance. For, the human soul is, in its origin, a pure essence of the essence of the angels. It is a like a mirror in which the Divine Presence shows Itself when, upon departure from this world, (the soul) has not been tarnished. With every sin one commits, a darkness is deposited upon the mirror of the soul; and with every act of devotion, a light attaches itself to it and drives off that darkness from the soul.

The effects of the lights of devotion and the darkness of sins are continually following one another in the mirror. When the darkness has become great and one has repented, the lights of devotion rout the darkness. The soul returns to its clarity and purity. However, if one is so stubborn in one's sinning that the tarnish has reached the essence of the soul, and penetrated it deeply, it will not be receptive to treatment any more. It is like the mirror that has been corroded by tarnish. Such a soul is itself unable to repent, except by (uselessly) uttering with the tongue: "I have repented."

Just as a dirty garment becomes clean when you wash it with soap, the soul is purified of the darkness of sins by lights of devotion. For this the Messenger (S) said: "After every unseemly deed, do some good (deed) so as to erase (the bad)." And he said: "If thou committest so many sins that they reach the heavens and thou then repentest, it will be accepted." And he said: "There is a servant (of God) who goes to Paradise because of his sins." He was asked: "How is that possible?" He replied: "By committing a sin and regretting it. That (regret) is before his eyes until he reaches heaven." It has been said it may be that Iblis says: "Would that I had not thrown him into that sin!" The Messenger (S) said: "Good deeds erase bad deeds as soap the dirt of a garment." And he said: "When Iblis became accursed, he said (to God): 'By Thine Honor, I shall not come out of the soul of a human being so long as there is life in his body.' God Most High said: 'By My honor, I shall not shut the door of repentance upon him so long as there is life in his body.'"

An Ethiopian came to the Messenger (S) and said: "I have done many vile things. Will my repentance be accepted?" (The Messenger) replied: "It will." When he was leaving, he turned back and asked:

"During the time that I was committing sins, did He see me?" (The Messenger) said: "He did." With a cry, the Ethiopian fell down and gave up his spirit.

Fudayl says: "God, may he be honored and glorified, has said to one of the messengers: 'Give the good news to the sinners among my servants that if they repent, I shall accept (their repentance). Frighten the truly righteous (by telling them) that if I were to deal with absolute justice, I would punish them all.'" Talq bin Habib[1405] says: "The rights due God Most High are far greater than that which one can fulfill. Make the effort to arise in the morning in repentance and to lie down at night in repentance." Habib bin Thabit[1406] says: "The servant (of God) will be shown his sins. As each sin arrives, he will say: 'Ah! I had always feared thee.' Then they will make that of benefit to him because he had feared (that sin)."

Among the Children of Israel, there was one who had committed many sins. He wanted to repent, but did not know whether (his repentance) would be accepted or not. He was directed to someone who was the most worshipful of his era. (The man) asked him: "Is there repentance for me? I have committed many sins and killed ninety-nine people." He replied: "No." (The sinner) slew him too so that (the number of his victims) became an even hundred. Then he was directed to the most knowledgeable person of his era. (The sinner) went to him and asked, saying: "Is there repentance for me?" He answered: "Yes, but thou must leave thine own country as there is corruption here and go to such-and-such a place where the people are righteous." (The sinner) started out and on the way died.[1407] The angels of punishment and of mercy disputed over him, each group saying (his soul) was in their jurisdiction. God Most High commanded that the earth be measured and they found that (the deceased had died) one hand's breadth nearer to the country of the righteous. Then the angels of mercy carried away his soul. For this reason, it is apparent that the complete emptiness of sin one's tray of evil deeds (on the scales of justice) is not a prerequisite; but the tray of good deeds must exceed it, even if only by a little, and through that, one achieves salvation.

Disclosing Venial and Mortal Sins

Know that repentance is of sin. However much the sin is smaller, the matter is less serious when one does not persist in them. In the

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[1405] Ṭalq bin Ḥabīb: al-ʿAnazī. Also quoted by Qushayri. Ibn Qutaybah calls him a Traditionist in *Al-Maʿarif*.

[1406] Ḥabīb bin Thābit: possibly the Habib bin Abi Thabit mentioned by Ibn Khallikan. No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1407] "died": literally, "received the command" (*farmān yāft*).

Traditions, it is related that performing formal prayer is the atonement of all sins except mortal sins. Attending the Friday congregational prayer is an atonement because all sins are atoned for by means of the Friday congregational prayer—except mortal sins. God Most High said: *If ye avoid the great (sins) which are forbidden, We will acquit you of your evil deeds...* (Q. 4:31)[1408] "If they withhold from mortal sins, We shall forgive venial sins." Consequently, it is a religious obligation to know which are the mortal sins. The Companions differed concerning this. Some said there are seven. Others said they were more and others fewer. Ibn 'Abbas heard that Ibn 'Umar had said: "There are seven mortal sins." (Ibn 'Abbas) said: "They are closer to seventy than to seven." Abu Talib Makki, who compiled *The Food of Hearts,*[1409] says: "I have collected all the Traditions and the sayings of the Companions: there are seventeen mortal sins":

FOUR are of the soul: first, unbelief; second, persistence in sin, even though it be venial, as the person who does bad deeds and does not have (the intention) in his heart ever to repent; another is the hopelessness of the mercy of God Most High which is called "despair"; another is (the idea that one has) immunity from the devices of God Most High, so that one is complacent, (thinking): "I myself am forgiven."

FOUR are of the tongue: one is bearing false witness so that truth is foiled; second, the defaming of married women[1410] so that (their) prescribed punishment becomes necessary; third, swearing false oaths by which one takes property or wealth from someone unjustly; fourth, casting spells, for they too are words which are uttered by the tongue.

THREE are of the stomach: one is imbibing wine and all that brings drunkenness; another is consuming the property of an orphan; another is taking and giving usury.[1411]

[1408] The conclusion of the verse, omitted by Ghazzali, is: *and (We will) admit you by a noble gate.* (Q. 4:31)

[1409] *The Food of Hearts*, an important work on Sufism and one of the oldest, by Abu Talib al-Makki (Abu Talib of Makkah), who died AH355/996CE. "He is well grounded in theology and Traditions, and is greatly interested to prove the orthodoxy of Sufi doctrine and practice, so that his famous work, the *Qūt al-Qulūb* [*The Food of Hearts*], is found to contain somewhat more of careful argument and somewhat less of curious quotation. Nevertheless, the book is of primary importance, as being the first—and a very successful—attempt to construct an overall design for orthodox Sufis: ...(it) was carefully studied by al-Ghazali [sic.] and exercised considerable influence on his mode of thought and writing." [A.J. Arberry, *Sufism*, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1950) p. 68.]

[1410] "defaming married women" with a false accusation of adultery. The punishment for adultery would be stoning.

[1411] Of the three cited, only the first is properly a sin of the stomach, as we would conceive of it in English. However, in Persian all three are construed with the verb for eating *khwurdan*. Using the property of orphans is literally *eating* their property. Similarly, taking usurious interest is literally *eating* usury.

TWO are of the genitalia: adultery and sodomy.

TWO ARE of the hand: killing and stealing in a manner that prescribed punishment becomes necessary.

ONE is of the feet: that is running away from battle with unbelievers, as when one flees from two, or ten flee from twenty. However, if (the odds) are greater (than two to one), flight is lawful.

ONE is of the whole body: that is disobedience to one's mother and father.

Know that these have been acknowledged (as major sins) because for some of them the prescribed punishment[1412] is obligatory and because for some there are great threats (about them) in the Quran. In their details, there has been some modification, which we have discussed in *The Revival* and cannot be contained in this book. The object of learning this is that one exercise greater caution with regard to these mortal sins.

One must also know that persistence in venial sins is also a mortal sin, even if we say that the performance of religious obligations atone for venial sins. There is no dispute about the fact that if there is a grain of oppression on one's neck for which one has not atoned, so long as one does not requite it, one is not relieved of the responsibility for it. In short, every sin which is related to God Most High has a greater chance of forgiveness than that which is related to injuries to mankind.

In the Traditions, it is related that there are three ledgers of sins: a ledger for the unforgivable and that is attributing partners to God and unbelief; a ledger which is forgivable, and those are the sins between a servant (of God) and God Most High; and a ledger which is not passed over and that is the ledger of injuries to (God's) servants. Know that whatever results in the sorrow of a Muslim is among them, be it to his person, his property, his dignity, his virtue, or to his religion, as in the case of a person who invites people to heresy so as to cut off their religion, or the person who holds an assembly and says things which encourage people to sin.

DISCLOSING THAT BY WHICH VENIAL SINS BECOME MORTAL SINS

Know that there is the hope that a venial sin will be forgiven, but when for some reasons (the sinning) becomes great, the peril also becomes more serious; and they are six:

[1412] "prescribed punishment (*hadd*): the punishment prescribed by Religious Law (*sharīᶜah*).

THE FIRST (REASON) is that one persist (in the sin), such as the person who slanders others, wears silken clothing, makes frivolous music, or who repeatedly commits a sin. The effect of this in darkening the soul is tremendous, just as is continuous devotion in brightening the soul. For this, the Messenger (S) said: "The best works are those which are done continually, even if but a little." Its similitude is the drops of rainwater falling one after another on a stone. Inevitably, they will make a hole in the stone, but if water falls only once upon it, it does not have that effect. Consequently, whoever is afflicted with a venial sin must ask forgiveness, be remorseful, and determine not to do it again, so that it is said that a mortal sin becomes a venial sin by seeking the forgiveness (of God) and a venial sin becomes a mortal sin by persistence.

THE SECOND is that one considers a (venial) sin trivial and looks at it with scorn. A (venial) sin becomes major through this, while the sin one considers great becomes minor because, from considering a sin great, faith and fear arise. (Faith and fear) protect the soul from the darkness of sinning so that its effect is minimized. But holding (venial) sins to be minor is a kind of heedlessness from which a fondness for sin arises. This demonstrates that it has established a relationship with the soul, and the object of all is the soul. Whatever more affects the soul is more serious.

In the Traditions, it is related: "The believer sees his sin as a mountain looming above him. At every moment, he fears that it will tumble down upon him. The hypocrite sees his sin as a fly which sits upon his nose and flies away." It has been said: "The sin which is unforgivable is that which the servant (of God) says: 'This is easy; would that all of my sins were like this!'" Revelation came to some of the prophets: "Do not look at the triviality of a sin, look at the greatness of Him Whose command thou dost disobey." The more a servant (of God) knows of the majesty of God Most High, the greater his sins appear to him. One of the Companions says: "Ye commit sins which ye think are like hairs, while we would consider each one of them a mountain." In summary, the wrath of God Most High is hidden in sins. It may be in that which thou didst consider more trivial, as He said: *Ye counted it a trifle, but in the sight of God, it is very great.* (Q. 24:15)

THE THIRD is that one rejoices for a sin and considers it a windfall and a victory, and takes pride in that. Perhaps one says haughtily: "I deceived so-and-so and got some money from him. I chastised him and called him names. I embarrassed him and put him to shame in an argument with him," and the like. Anyone who takes delight in his own perdition and boasts about it demonstrates that his soul is become black, and destruction is from that. *May God save us from that!*

THE FOURTH is that because his sins remain veiled, he imagines that this itself is a mark of (divine) favor with respect to him. He does not fear that this is a respite and a consignment to punishment by degrees until he is completely ruined.

THE FIFTH is that one makes the sin public and throws the curtain of God Most High off from himself.[1413] Because of him, it may happen that another also desire (to imitate him) and one also obtains the punishment for the desire and sinning of others. If he openly encourages someone and makes his arrangements for him to instruct him, the crime itself is doubled. The forefathers have said: "There is no treachery to a Muslim greater than that thou makest a sin seem trivial to him."

THE SIXTH is that the person who commits the sin be learned and a leader. Because of his deeds, others are emboldened and say: "If it was not supposed to be done, he would not have done it!"—as when a learned scholar wears silken garments and goes to rulers and accepts their money. In debate, he lets loose the tongue of fatuity and taunts his own peers. He glories in the multiplication of rank and property. All of his students follow his example and they too become like their teacher. Other students follow their example. From each one of these a region is ruined, for the people of every city looks to one of them. The mischief of all necessarily falls upon the shoulders of the one who is emulated. With respect to this it has been said: "Blessed is he who dies and his sins die with him."

However, the sins of the person who has done thus will endure a thousand years after his death. One of the religious scholars of the Children of Israel repented. A revelation came to the messenger of the era that he should tell (the repenting scholar): "If the sin had been between thee and Me, I would have forgiven it. Now take it that thou hast repented; what dost thou do concerning the people thou hast led astray and who have remained thus?" It is for this reason that the learned are in the peril that their sins will be multiplied a thousandfold, just as their acts of devotion are multiplied a thousandfold because they receive the spiritual merit of those who follow their example. This is the reason that it is more incumbent upon the learned that they not sin, and if they do, they should conceal it. Indeed, if there is something permissible by which the people are encouraged to become heedless, (the learned) should abstain from it.

[1413] That is, by making his sins public he has thrown of the curtain with which God Most High had concealed them so that others not follow his example.

Zuhri says: "Before this we used to laugh and play, but now that we have become leaders, not even a smile is proper for us." It is a great crime for someone to relate the sins of a scholar, for because of that many people fall away from the path (of God) and become emboldened. Therefore, all should conceal (their) lapses, and the concealment of the lapses of the scholars is more necessary.[1414]

Disclosing the Prerequisites of Repentance and Their Signs

Know that basis of repentance is remorse and the result of that remorse is a resolution that appears (in one). Now, the sign of this remorse is that one is continually in sorrow and regret. One is always weeping, lamenting, and beseeching. How can any person who finds himself on the verge of perdition be devoid of regret and sorrow? If he has a sick child and a Christian or Zoroastrian doctor says that the illness is dangerous and it is feared that (the child) will die, it is obvious what flame of sorrow and fear will befall the soul of the father. And it is obvious that his own person is even dearer to him than that of the child.[1415] God and the Messenger of God are more truthful than the Christian physician, and the fear of ruin in the Hereafter is greater than the fear of the death of a child. The indication of a sin's leading to the indignation of God Most High is more apparent that the indication that an illness will lead to death. Thus, if fear and regret do not come to a person from these, it is because he has not yet come to the belief in the blight of sinning. However much more hotly that fire burns, its effect in the doing penance for sins is that much the greater. For, the verdigris and darkness that has been deposited upon his soul from sins will not melt except with the fire of regret and remorse for them. The soul commences to become cleansed and tender in that heat.

It is related in the Traditions: "Sit with the repentant, for their souls are more tender." However much more the soul has become limpid, it becomes that much more disgusted by sin. The sweetness of sinning is converted into bitterness in the soul. A prophet interceded for one of the Children of Israel in exchange for his repentance. A revelation came:

[1414] This concealment is motivitated by a desire to prevent emulation by the impressionable and, of course, differs from the concealment of the hypocrite who conceals sins in order to commit them while profiting from a public image of rectitude. In other words, this concealment is motivated by the public good, while the concealment of the hypocrite is motivated by a desire for personal advantage.

[1415] While this statement may seem somewhat callous to today's readers, it should be remembered that until the advances of medicine in the past few centuries, perhaps half of infants born died within the first year or two of life. Consequently, parents were inured to the common possibility of the death of small children and endeavored to have as many as possible to compensate. In such a situation, natural sentiment is to a degree dulled by harsh reality.

"By My honor, I shall not accept his repentance even though all the inhabitants of the heavens intercede on his behalf as long as the sweetness of those sins remains in his soul."

Know that sinning, even though it has a pleasurable nature, is for the repenter as honey laden with poison. A person who has tasted it once will endure much sorrow. When he thinks about that again, his hairs rise like blades out of the repugnance for that. The appetite for (sin) and its sweetness are covered by the fear of its harm. One must perceive the bitterness in all sins, for the sins that one has committed are poisonous in that in them lies the wrath of God Most High, and all sins are like that.

HOWEVER THE RESOLUTION that comes to one from this remorse is dependent upon three things: the present, the past, and the future:

AS FOR THE PRESENT, it is that one abandon all sins and occupy oneself with one's religious duties.

AS FOR THE FUTURE, it is that one resolve to restrain oneself from (sin) to the end of one's life and that one bind oneself to God Most High with strong bonds so that one never again returns to those sins, nor commits a fault in religious obligations, like the sick person who knows that fruit is harmful to him and resolves not to eat any. At the moment of resolve, there is no laxity nor hesitation, even though it is possible that a craving overcome him. It is not possible that one be able to accomplish repentance except by withdrawal, silence, and the lawful morsels one obtains, or one is able to earn. So long as one does not withhold one's hand from the doubtful, repentance will not be total. So long as one has not crushed the carnal appetites, one cannot withhold one's hand from the doubtful. It has been said thus: "If whoever is dominated by an appetite strives to restrain that desire seven times, it will become easy for him."

AS FOR THE RESOLUTION ABOUT THE PAST, it is dependent upon making up for the past by means of considering what his obligation is with respect to the rights of God Most High and with respect to the rights of (His) servants in the faults he has committed. As for that which is due to God Most High, there are two kinds: the performance of religious obligations and the abandonment of sin:

As for the performance of religious obligations, one must reflect upon the period from attaining puberty (to the present) and review it day by day. If one has missed a formal obligatory prayer, or was not wearing clean clothing, or the declaration of Intention for the formal obligatory prayer, or for fasting, or for any other act of worship contingent upon a declaration of Intention was not correct, either because one did not know it, or there was some flaw or doubt in one's belief—one should make them all up. One must calculate the poor rate from the time when one (first) had property but did not give to the deserving, or when one (first) had gold and silver utensils for which one did not pay the poor rate. All

of these calculations must be done to make known (the amount due) and it must be paid. If one has committed faults with respect to the fasting of Ramadan, or forgot the Declaration of Intention, or did not make it according to rule, these too (must be made up). From among all of these (lapses), those which one knows for certain must be made up. As for those about which one is not sure, one should make a probable estimate and be diligent, or one should hold calculated those which one knows with certainty and make up the rest. This is more complete. Or, it is permissible (if) one considers that which is a probable estimate also as (justly) calculated.

As for the sins, one must interrogate the eyes, ears, hands, tongue, belly, and all the organs as to what sins have been committed from the onset of puberty. If a mortal sin has been committed, such as adultery, sodomy, theft, winebibbing, and those things for which God Most High's punishment is a duty, one must repent for all of them. It is not required that one confess to the ruler so that the (Islamic legal) punishments be imposed upon him. Rather, one should conceal them and compensate for them with much devotion. The same is valid for venial sins. For example, if one has looked upon someone not of the prohibited degrees,[1416] or has laid an impure hand upon the Holy Quran,[1417] or one has sat in the mosque in a state of impurity,[1418] or has listened to the music of a stringed instrument; one must atone for all of these with its opposite so as to erase them, for God says: *Lo! Good deeds annul bad deeds.* (Q. 11:114)

However, whatever is the opposite has a greater effect: the atonement for listening to the music of stringed instruments is to listen to the Quran and (to attend) edifying lectures; the atonement for sitting in the mosque in a state of impurity is to remain in seclusion[1419] or by performing acts of worship. The atonement for touching the Quran with unpurified hands is to honor the Quran by much reading from it. The atonement for drinking wine is that one not drink a lawful drink which one likes and gives it away in charity, so that the light resulting from (the atonement) obliterates every darkness (upon the soul) which has resulted from it. Indeed, the atonement for every merriment and wantonness one has done in the world is sorrow and the pain that one endures from the world. For, because of pleasure and the comfort of the world, the soul

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[1416] "someone not of the prohibited degrees" (*nā mahram*): someone with whom marriage (and therefore sexual intercourse) is possible.

[1417] That is, one has touched the Quran in a state of ritual impurity, without performing the obligatory ablution.

[1418] "a state of impurity" (*junub*): This state, most commonly after sexual intercourse, requires a full ablution (*ghusl*: bath), before performing acts of devotion or worship.

[1419] "to remain in seclusion" (*iʿtikāf*): retreat or seclusion, usually in a mosque or some other religious establishment, for a period of time.

hangs upon the world and becomes bound to it, but with every tribulation it suffers in the world, the soul separates from it and the soul is released from it, and it supposes (it) an abomination.

It is for this that it is related in the Traditions: "Every trouble that afflicts a believer, even if it be but thorns in his feet, is an atonement for his sins." The Messenger (S) said: "There are some sins that cannot be atoned for except by sorrow." In another Tradition: "One does not atone for them except with anxiety about one's family and their livelihood." 'Ayishah (R) says: "God throws anxiety in the soul of the servant (of God) who has many sins and does not have the acts of devotion to atone for them." Do not think to say: "This anxiety is not under his control, for one may also be anxious about worldly affairs, and this is itself a sin; so how is it atonement?" This is not the case. Indeed, everything which turns thy soul away from the world in disgust is to thy good, even though it be not by thy choice. Rather, if the world were to be filled with joy and that were the desired end, the world would have become thy Paradise. Joseph (A) asked Gabriel (A): "How didst thou leave that old man—my father Jacob (A)—in sorrow?" (Gabriel) replied: "In the sorrow of a hundred mothers of slain children." (Joseph) said: "How didst thou compensate him for that?" (Gabriel) answered: "With the spiritual reward of a hundred martyrs."

As for the oppressions against the servants (of God), one must reckon his own transactions with all people. Indeed, (he must) count his social intercourse and his speech, so that he may clear the accounts with whoever has a claim on him for property or money, or (something) due because of his causing someone trouble, or slander. Whatever can be given back must be returned. Whatever requires quittance from someone, that quittance must be sought. If he has killed someone, he must surrender himself to (the dead person's) heirs for retaliation or forgiveness. He should seek out the owner of what he has obtained—dirhams, grain, or seed—and return (the goods) to him. If (the owner) cannot be found, he should give it to his heirs. This is extremely difficult, especially for officials and businessmen, as their transactions are numerous. It is difficult for every one concerning slanderous talk; one cannot seek out all of them. If this has become impossible, there is no way except to increase one's acts of devotion until enough devotion is collected so that when that which is due others (for one's transgressions against them) are deducted from his devotions at the Resurrection, an amount sufficient (for his salvation) will remain.

EXCURSUS: [EIGHT ACTS THAT ATONE FOR SINS AFTER THEIR COMMISSION][1420]

Know that whoever commits a sin while repenting must quickly atone and make amends for that. The (non-Prophetic) Traditions point to eight acts that are the atonement for a sin after its commission:

Four are in the soul: one is repentance or the resolution to repent; another is the desire not (to sin) again; third is that one be chastened, and the fourth is the hope or forgiveness.

Four are of the body: one is that one perform two bows of formal prayer. After that one seeks forgiveness from God seventy times[1421] and recites "*Glory to My Great Lord and with His praise*"[1422] one hundred times; third, one fasts for one day; fourth, which is found in some of the non-Prophetic Traditions, is that one performs a good ablution and goes to the mosque and performs two bows of formal prayer.

In the Traditions, it is related: "When thou hast committed a sin in private, perform acts of devotion in private in atonement for that. If (the sin was committed) in public, perform the act of devotion in public." And know that seeking God's forgiveness with the tongue where the soul is not present has no profit. It is the partnership of the soul with that, in which there is fear and supplication in seeking forgiveness, and it should not be devoid of shame and contrition. When these exist, even if one has not resolved to repent, there is hope. In short, asking God's forgiveness with the tongue while the soul is disengaged is not (entirely) without profit because the tongue is prevented from foolishness for a time, and it is also better than silence,[1423] for when the tongue becomes accustomed to goodness, it inclines more towards the words of the asking of forgiveness than to curses, foolishness, etc.

A disciple said to 'Uthman Maghribi:[1424] "There are times when I remember God without my soul." He said: "Give thanks that one of your organs has been placed in (His) service." In this, there is (an opportunity for) deception for Satan, who says: "Silence thy tongue from remembering God; for if thy soul is not present, it is disrespectful." In their reply to Satan, people are of three kinds:

[1420] From the AA text.

[1421] That is, one recites the formula *I seek the forgiveness of God* seventy times. One version of this runs: *I seek God's forgiveness, my Lord, from all sins, and I turn to him in penitence; there is no power and no strength save in God, the Exalted, the Tremendous.*

[1422] In Arabic: *Subhāna rabbiya-l ʿazīm wa bihamdihi.*

[1423] "it is also better than silence": that is, it is better than not uttering the pious phrases. In other situations, silence is often recommended. See following paragraphs.

[1424] 'Uthman Maghribi: Abu 'Uthmān Saʿid bin Sallām al-Maghribi. 'Attar devotes a section to him in the *Tadhkirah* in which he says the shaykh live 130 years. He became a hermit for twenty years and had a pleasant voice in the *samāʿ*. (See Ch. 8 of the First Pillar about *samaʿ*.) 'Attar lavishes praise on his asceticism and self-discipline.

One is the person who goes before. He says: "Thou speakest the truth. To spite thee, I shall also engage my soul." This is throwing salt on Satan's wounds.

Another is the oppressor. He says: "Thou speakest the truth. There is no profit in the movements of the tongue without the presence of the soul." He silences his asking for God's forgiveness and imagines that he has done something clever, while in fact he has risen in friendship and in accord with Satan.

The third keeps to the middle. He says: "Remembrance of God with the soul is better, as a king is better than a moneychanger, but a moneychanger is better than a sweeper." It is not necessary that anyone who is unable to rule as a king to give up money changing too and become a sweeper.

Disclosing the Treatment for Not Repenting

Know that the treatment of persons who do not repent is that thou know the reason for their persistence in sin and their not repenting. These are five reasons and for each one there is a different treatment:

THE FIRST is that he does not have faith in the Hereafter, or is in doubt about it. We have discussed the treatment of this self-deception in the last chapter of *The Pillar of the Destroyers* in this book.

THE SECOND REASON is that carnal appetite has become so dominant that one does not have the strength to abandon it. Pleasure and carnal appetite have so overwhelmed him that they keep him heedless of the peril of the affair of the Hereafter and the danger of punishment. The veil (between man and God) for most people is the appetites. About this, said the Messenger (S): "God Most High created hell and said to Gabriel: 'Look!' When (Gabriel) looked and saw its awesome terrors, he said: 'By Thine Honor, no one who has heard of its nature will enter into it.' Then, God Most High created the carnal passions surrounding hell and said: 'Look!' (Gabriel) looked and said: 'I fear that no one will be left who does not fall into hell.' Then, He created Paradise and said: 'Look!' When (Gabriel) looked, he said: 'No one who has heard of its nature will not hasten unto it.' Then, He created the misfortunes and bitter matters the are on the way to Paradise and which surround it. He said: 'O Gabriel, look!' (Gabriel) said: 'I looked, by Thine Honor, I fear that no one will go to Paradise because of the multitude of troubles on his way.'"

THE THIRD REASON is that the Hereafter is a promise, while the world is ready cash. Human nature inclines to ready cash. In man's opinion, everything that is on credit is far off and also distant from the soul.

THE FOURTH REASON is that whoever is a believer is determined to repent every day, but he postpones it until tomorrow. At every appetite that appears he says: "Let me do this and I shall not do it again."

THE FIFTH REASON is that sin does not necessarily carry one off to hell; rather, forgiveness is possible. A human being thinks positively with respect to his lot. When an appetite overcomes him, he says: "God Most High will forgive me." He is in the hope of (divine) mercy.

As for the treatment for the first reason, that one does not believe in the Hereafter, we have already explained that.[1425]

As for the treatment for one's thinking that the Hereafter is a (future) credit so that one does not abandon the ready cash and the opinion that the Hereafter is distant and one imagines it far from the soul, it is that one know: "Assume that everything which will inevitably come, has come, so much that thy closing of thine eyes and thy death have become real."[1426] Perhaps, it will be today, perhaps it will be tomorrow, perhaps this very hour—that that promised payment will be transformed into cash, and the ready cash of the past will be transformed into a credit and become like a dream.

As for that person who cannot give up pleasure, he must understand that as he cannot endure an hour without satisfying his appetites, how will he endure the fire of hell? How will he endure the deprivation of the delights of Paradise? If he falls ill and there is nothing for him like cold water, and an unknown and unbelieving[1427] physician says to him: "This cold water is harmful to you," how will he oppose his craving in the hope of obtaining a cure? The hope of eternal kingship at the word of God and (His) Messenger is better, for it is the cause of the abandonment of appetite.

As for one who puts off repentance, it is said to him: "Thou postponest it until tomorrow, but the coming of tomorrow is not in thy hands. Perhaps it will not come and thou wilt perish." It is for this reason that in the Traditions it is related: "Most of the clamor of the inhabitants of hell is about procrastination." And it is said to (the procrastinating repenter): "Why doth thou put off repentance today? If thou sayest: 'Until tomorrow, and that abandoning the appetites is difficult,' it will be the same tomorrow. For, God Most High has not created a day in which the abandonment of the carnal appetite is easy. Thou art like the person to whom they say: 'Dig out this tree from its roots.' He says: 'The tree is strong and I am weak. I'll wait until next year.' They say: 'Look at this fool! Next year the tree will be stronger and thou wilt be weaker.'" The tree of carnal appetite, too, gains strength day by day as thou cooperatest

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[1425] In Chapter 10 of the Third Pillar.

[1426] "become real": literally, "become cash."

[1427] "unbelieving" (*bī-dīn*): lit. "without religion." The Persian word can also mean "impious, irreligious, heretical, unbelieving (non-Muslim)," etc. Since Ghazzali has already made several disparaging references Jewish and Christian doctors, one may suppose that this is his intent.

with it and thou daily becomest more incapable of opposing it. The sooner thou startest, the easier (it will be).

As for the believer who holds that: "I am a believer and God Most High will forgive the believers," we say: "It may be that He will not forgive thee. As thou hast no acts of devotion, the tree of faith is weakening and at the time of death will be uprooted in the violent storms of the agonies of death. For, faith is a tree that is watered by devotion (to God). When it has not derived strength from that, it is endangered. Indeed, faith without devotion and with many sins is like the man who is sick with many ailments. At every moment, there is the fear that he will die.

Then, if (the believer) carries his faith safely (through the trials of death), it is possible that He will forgive him. It is also possible that He will punish him. The prevailing (view) is that all the messengers, peace be upon them, were sent in order to say that sinning is the cause of punishment. Sitting (complacently) in this expectation (of forgiveness because one is a believer) is folly. He is like the person who loses all that he possesses, leaves his family hungry, and says: "Perhaps they will go to a ruin and find a treasure." Or, the city is being looted and he does not hide his goods and puts them back in his house. He says: "Perhaps this tyrant will die when he reaches my house, or neglect to enter my house." All of these are possible, and the hope for forgiveness is the same, but relying upon this and refraining from caution is folly.

EXCURSUS: [WHETHER REPENTANCE FROM SOME SINS IS CORRECT OR NOT][1428]

Know that there is a difference of opinion concerning the person who has repented for some of his sins, but not all of them. Is this repentance valid or not? Some have said: "It is absurd for a person to repent for committing adultery and not for drinking wine, for if he does so because one is a sin, so is the other; just as it is absurd for him to repent for drinking one (kind of) wine and not another (kind of) wine. Both are equal and the sins are just the same."

The correct view is that such repentance is possible, for it may happen that one think adultery more serious than winebibbing and repent for the more serious (sin). Or, one may think that drinking wine is more serious than adultery because it is involved in adultery and other things as well. Or perhaps, for example, one repents for slandering, but not for drinking wine, saying that the former is related to (other) people and is, therefore, more serious. Indeed, it is permissible to repent for excessive drinking of wine, but not for drinking wine itself, saying: "The more thou

[1428] From the AA text.

drinkest, the greater is the punishment" and I cannot in fact overcome the appetite itself, but I can overcome the excessiveness. There is no rule that since Satan has made me helpless in something that I must be in accord with him in that which I am not helpless."

All of these are possible, but from that which has come down: "*The repenter is the beloved of God*," and what is said in the Quran: *Truly, God loves those who turn to him (in repentance) and He loves those who purify themselves*, (Q. 2:222) it would appear that this love is for those persons who repent of all their sins. He who says that repentance for some sins (only) is not correct is perhaps referring to (the above verse). Otherwise, the atonement for every venial sin for which one repents becomes its repentance, and it is as though it had not been committed. Repentance at one time for all sins is difficult. More often, it is done gradually and one receives spiritual reward in the amount in which it becomes possible (to repent). *And God is the Best Knower of what is correct.*

CHAPTER TWO: CONCERNING PATIENCE AND GRATITUDE

Know that repentance does not come without patience; indeed, no performance of any act of devotion, nor the abstention from any sin, comes without patience. It was for this that the Messenger (S) was asked: "What is faith?" He replied: "Patience."[1429] In another Tradition, he said: "Patience is one half of faith." It is because of the importance of patience that God Most High has mentioned "patience" more than seventy times in the Quran.[1430] Every degree which is superior (to a previous one) has been conferred with patience. Even leadership in the way of religion has been conferred with patience. And He said: *And We made from amongst them leaders, guiding by Our command, and they endured patiently and they had firm faith in Our signs.* (Q. 32:24) He delivered to them a limitless and uncountable reward with patience, and He said: *surely, the patient will be paid their wages without reckoning.* (Q. 39:10) He promised the patient that He is with them when He said: *Surely God is with the patient.* (Q. 2:153) Blessings, mercy, and guidance: these three have not come together except for the patient: He said: *Upon them are blessings from their Lord, and mercy, and they are rightly guided.* (Q. 2:157)

It is because of the importance of the virtue of patient that God Most High valued it and did not bestow it upon every person, except for a few of His Own friends, for the Messenger (S) said: "*The least of that which has been brought to you is certainty and firm intention of patience.*" He said: "The least of the things which have been given you are certainty and patience. And to whomever these two have been given say: 'Have no fear if one does not have much formal prayer and fasting. If ye be patient and do not alter that which ye hold today with the Companions, I prefer that to the performance by each one of you the acts of devotion of all of you (added) together. But I fear that the way of the world be spread open to you so that after me, ye will deny one another. The inhabitants of the heavens will deny you. Whoever is steadfast and keeps his eye on spiritual reward will obtain that spiritual reward completely. Be patient, for the world does not endure, but the spiritual

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[1429] "Patience" (*ṣabr*): this is the usual rendering of *sabr*, but one should think more of the patience of Job—the endurance of suffering and privation, steadfastness without complaint—rather than the aspect of waiting and expectation that modern usage of the English word conveys. Perhaps "patient endurance" better conveys the meaning. Among the definitions given by Steingass under the heading *ṣabr*, the following are pertinent: "being patient, waiting patiently; patience, toleration, endurance; resignation..."

[1430] In its various verbal and nominative permutations, it is actually mentioned close to ninety times in the Quran. (Baqi)

reward of God Most High does: *That which is with you comes to an end, but that which is with God endures; and surely We shall compensate those who were patient according to the best of what they did.* (Q. 16:96)

And the Messenger (S) said: "Patience is a treasure of the treasures of Paradise." And he said: "If patience were a man, he would be a generous man and God Most High loves the patient." Revelation came to David (A): "Follow my example in character, and one of the qualities of my character is that I am very patient." Jesus (A) said: "Ye shall not obtain that which ye desire so long as ye are not patient with that which ye do not desire." The Messenger (S) saw a group of the Helpers. He asked: "Are ye believers?" They replied: "Yes." He asked: "What is the sign of your faith?" They said: "We give thanks in ease and are patient in adversity and we are pleased with the decree of God." He said: "*By the Lord of the Ka'bah, ye are believers!*" 'Ali (R) said: "Patience is to faith as the head is to the body. Whoever does not have a head, does not have a body; whoever does not have patience, does not have faith."

The True Nature of Patience

Know that patience is a human trait; brutish beasts do not have patience and are very deficient. Angels have no need of patience, for they are the extremity of perfection and free from appetite. Thus, beasts are subjugated by appetite alone. They have no importuner other than appetite, while the angels are immersed in the love of the Divine Presence. There is no obstacle for them to be patient in the overcoming of it.

Moreover, at first, a human being is created in the character of the beasts, and the craving for food, clothing, decoration, amusement, and play have been made dominant over him. Then, at the time of puberty, a light from the angelic lights appears in him and he sees the results of affairs in that light. Indeed, two angels have been appointed over him, of which the beasts are deprived. One angel guides him and shows him the way by means of a light which spreads to him from the lights of the angel so that he recognizes the end of affairs and sees the prudence of affairs, until he comes to know himself and God Most High by that light. He understands that the end result of the appetites is total destruction, even if there be delight for the moment. He understands that his pleasure and ease are quickly transitory, while his sorrow will be long lasting. This guidance is not for the beasts.

However, this guidance is not sufficient, for if one learns that (something) causes loss and that one does not possess the power to ward it off, what is the benefit? A sick person knows that the disease is harmful to him, but he is unable to repulse it. Therefore, God, may He be

praised, has appointed the other angel over him to give him strength and power and to support and direct him so that he will refrain from that which he has learned is harmful to him. As it is his need that he control his lusts, something else must appear in him to oppose that in order to escape harm in the future. This compulsion[1431] for opposition is that of the angelic hosts, while the compulsion to give rein to the appetites is that of the demonic hosts. This compulsion to oppose the carnal appetite is what we call the "religious impulse," and the compulsion to give rein to the carnal appetites we call the "carnal impulse."

As a result, there is continuous warfare and opposition between these two armies. One says: "Do it!" while the other says: "Do it not!" One remains continually between these two importuning (forces). If the religious impulse is dug in firmly in the battle with the carnal impulse and is steadfast, its steadfastness) is called "patience." Therefore, that is the meaning of patience. If it overcomes the carnal impulse and repulses it, its triumph is called "victory." While the battle continues in him, this is called "the earnest striving against the self." So, the meaning of patience is the remaining firm of the religious impulse in opposition against the carnal impulse. Wherever these two opposing armies are not present, there is no patience. This is because there is no need of patience for the angels, while beasts and children do not themselves have the power of patience.

Know that these two angels whom we have mentioned are their Recording Angels.[1432] To whomever the way of opinion and ratiocination has been opened, he knows that for every occurrence there is a cause. When two things are in opposition, two opposing causes are need. He sees that for a beast or a child there is at first no guidance and no insight to understand the consequences of acts. (A child) does not have the motivation or the strength to be patient, but when approaching puberty, both appear (in him). He knows that two causes are needed for this and those two angels are the expressions of those two causes. He also knows that guidance is the source and its precursor. Then power and will work with it.

Consequently, that angel whose brief is guidance is nobler and superior, so that the right-hand side of the breast is certain for him. Thou art the breast; they are thy guardians. Therefore, he is the angel of the right hand. Since he is charged with thee, when thou listen to him in order to obtain guidance and spiritual insight, thy hearkening is (counted

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[1431] "compulsion" (*bāyist*): The Persian word *bāyist* is a verbal form meaning "it is necessary; it behooves." Here is it is used nominally. The equivalent passage in the Arabic *The Revival* uses the word *hirs*, "avidity, greed, craving." *Bāyist* is a stronger word and "compulsion" is used because it is stronger, and also to differentiate it from other forms of craving for which other words are commonly used.

[1432] "Recording Angels": *Kirāmul-Kātibīn*.

as) a good deed that thou hast performed. It is recorded as one of thy good deeds because thou hast not left (the angel of the right hand) neglected. And if thou turnest away and neglect him so that thou remain like children and beasts, deprived of the guidance as to consequences, this is an evil deed which thou will have committed with respect to (that angel) and to thyself, and it will be recorded against thy. In the same way, if thou utilizest that strength which thou hast obtained from the other for opposing the carnal appetites and strive earnestly, that is a good deed. If thou doth not, it is a bad deed. Both inscribe these states in thy ledgers. Though they are inside thy soul, they are hidden from thy soul.

These two angels and their ledgers are not of this visible world, nor can they be seen with the eye (of this world). When death comes and the eyes of this visible (world) are closed, another eye by which one can see the angelic world opens and one sees these ledgers at hand and thou mayest see them. At the Lesser Resurrection, thou wilt be informed about that. As for its exposition, thou wilt see that in the Greater Resurrection. The Lesser Resurrection is at the time of death, as the Messenger (S) said: "*His Resurrection is ready for whoever dies.*" Whatever is in the Greater Resurrection is foreshadowed in the Lesser Resurrection. We have discussed the details of this in *The Revival*; it would exceed the capacity of this book.

The point is that thou know that patience is a battlefield, and a battlefield is a place where there are two opposing armies. These two armies—one is the angelic cavalry and the other is the demonic cavalry—are gathered in the human breast. Therefore, the first step in the way of religion is involving oneself in this battle, for the demonic hosts have seized the field of the breast in childhood, and the angelic hosts have appeared at the approach of puberty. Consequently, so long as one has not triumphed over the carnal appetite, one will not achieve his (spiritual) happiness. So long as one does not fight and is not steadfast in battle, one will not prevail. Whoever does not involve himself in this war is he who has surrendered his guardianship to Satan. And whoever has controlled his appetite and made it obedient to the Law has prevailed over it, is as the Messenger (S) said: "*God aided me in the battle with Satan so that he surrendered to me.*" Usually one is engaged in earnest struggle. One time there is victory, another time rout; one time appetite prevails, and another time the religious impulse. That fortress will not be conquered save with patience and steadfastness.

Disclosing Why Patience Is One Half of Faith and Why Fasting Is One Half of Patience

Know that faith is not (just) one thing. Rather, it has many branches and kinds. As it is related in the Traditions, there are seventy-

odd gateways to faith. The greatest of these is the declaration: *There is no god save God,* and the least is picking up trash from the road. No matter how many of these types there are, their sources are of three types: various kinds of (spiritual) knowledge, states, and deeds. No station of the stations of faith is devoid of these three.

For example, the true nature of repentance is remorse and this is a state of the soul. Its source is the knowledge that sin is a lethal poison. The corollary of this is that one should restrain one's hand from sinning and become occupied with devotion. Thus, that state and this knowledge and these acts (of restraint and devotion), all three, are parts of faith and faith consists of these three. But, it may be that it is only credited to (spiritual) knowledge, because the source of this is that state which appears from knowledge; and from that state deeds are born. So, (spiritual) knowledge is like a tree, the alteration of the states of the soul due to knowledge are like the branches of the tree, and the deeds which are born from those states are like the fruit of the tree.

Thus, the totality of faith is two things: perception and behavior, and behavior without patience is not possible. Consequently, patience is half of faith. One must be patient in two things: one is of the nature of appetite and the other is of the nature of anger. Fasting is patience with the nature of appetite, so it is one half of patience. When thou lookest at it from another aspect, all is involved with behavior, and thou construest faith with that. The behavior of the believer in affliction is patience and in ease, it is gratitude. From this point of view, patience is one half of faith, and gratitude is one half of faith, as it is related in the Traditions. When thou lookest at that which is more difficult and harder, thou takest that as the basis. There is nothing more difficult than patience. From this aspect, patience is the totality of faith. As (the Messenger) was asked: "What is faith?" He replied: "Patience." That is, it is the most difficult. As he said: "The Greater Pilgrimage is 'Arafah."[1433] That is, because of the awesomeness of the spiritual reward for doing that. By missing ('Arafah), one misses (the spiritual reward) of the Pilgrimage, but it is not lost by missing other rites (of the Pilgrimage).

Disclosing the Necessity for Patience at All Times

Know that at all times the servant (of God) is not devoid of things that are in agreement with his desire, or in opposition to it. In both circumstances, patience is a necessity:

[1433] "'Arafah": The patient standing on the Plain of 'Arafah to demonstrate one's attendance and readiness to fulfill the commands of God Most High. It is the climax of the Pilgrimage.

AS FOR THAT WHICH IS IN AGREEMENT with one's desire, such as wealth, comfort, rank, bodily health, wife, children according to his wish, and the likes of these, steadfastness and patience is never more important than in these circumstances. For, if one does not take hold of himself and he exceeds the limits in ease and comfort and sets his heart upon them and becomes attached to them, hubris and tyranny are born in him. Indeed, it has been said that everyone is patient in adversity, but not in well-being—except the truly righteous person. When wealth and comfort became abundant in the time of the Companions, they said: "We were better able to be steadfast the time when we endured hardships than we are now when we are in comfort and wealth." About this God Most High said: *[And know] that your possessions and your children are a test.* (Q. 8:28)

In short, being steadfastly patient in prosperity is difficult. The greatest defence against that is not being prosperous. Patience in ease is that one does not set one's heart upon it or rejoice excessively because of it. He knows that is a loan and that it will soon be taken back. Indeed, one does not consider it itself to be comfort, for it itself is the cause of a loss of his degrees at the Resurrection. Therefore, he must engage himself in expressing gratitude for (those blessings) that God Most High gives of wealth and bodily health, and for every blessing that he has. In every one of these, patience is necessary.

AS FOR THOSE CONDITIONS that were are not in agreement with his desire, they are of three kinds: one is that which is of his choosing, such as devotion and the abandonment of sin; another is that which is not of his choosing, such as calamity and tragedy; and the other is that which is not originally of his choosing, but for which he has a choice in fending off or exacting retribution, such as in the annoyance of people.

As for that which is of one's choosing, such as acts of devotion, patience is a necessity in that, as some acts of worship are difficult because they are tiring, such as formal prayer. Some are (difficult) because of stinginess, such as paying the poor rate. Some are from both—such as the Greater Pilgrimage—which are not possible (of fulfillment) without steadfast patience. In every act of devotion, patience is a necessity: at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. As for the beginning, one acquires sincerity in the declaration of the Intention, keeps it firm, and banishes hypocrisy from the soul. This is a difficult kind of steadfastness. Another is that one remain steadfast during (the performance of the act of devotion) according to its conditions and rules so that it not be tainted with any other thing. If it is to be during formal prayer, one should not look about or harbor any worldly thoughts. As for the end of the act of worship, one must be patient about disclosing what

one has done and talking about it, and one must be steadfast with respect to vanity about that.

AS FOR SINS, there is no doubt but that abstention from them is not possible without patience. However much the appetite is stronger, the sinning is easier. It is for this reason that patience with respect to the sins of the tongue is more difficult, for the tongue is brought into action more easily. When talkativeness becomes a habit, the habit becomes nature. One of the armies of Satan is habit and it is because of this that tongue is fluent in slander, lies, self-praise, the defamation of others, and the like. There is a great suffering in being patient about uttering the words that will astonish and please people. For the most part, one cannot keep oneself from being involved, except by seeking safety in seclusion.

AS FOR THE SECOND KIND, it is that which is not of one's choosing, such as people's annoying him by hand and tongue, but he has a choice with regard to retaliation. It has the need of perfect patience to refrain from retaliation, or to keep oneself within proper limits when retaliating. One of the Companions says: "We did not count belief as belief so long as it was not accompanied by patience in (the face of) the vexations caused by others." It was for this that God Most High said to the Messenger (S): "Let them torment thee and trust in Me": *Heed not their hurt and put thy trust in God.* (Q. 33:48) He said: "Be patient with what they say and cut (thyself) off from them courteously": *And bear with patience what they utter and part from them with a fair leaving.* (Q. 73:10) And He said: "I know that thou art distressed by the words of thine enemies, but busy thyself with (My) glorification: *Indeed We know that thy bosom is straitened by that which they say; but proclaim thy Lord's praise and be one of those who prostrate themselves.* (Q. 15:97-98)

Once the Messenger (S) was distributing goods. Someone said: "This is not for God"; that is, it was not just. The Messenger (S) was informed about this. He turned red and became upset, and then said: "May God have mercy upon my brother Moses (A) for he was troubled even more and remained patient for the sake of God." And he said: "God Most High says: 'If ye are punished and ye retaliate, ye have done several times (worse). If ye are patient, it would be better: *If ye punish, then punish with the like of that wherewith ye were afflicted, but if ye endure patiently; truly, it is better for the patient.* (Q. 16:126) And I saw written in the Gospel that Jesus (A) said: "The people who have come before me said: 'Cut off a hand for a hand, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' and I do not nullify that, but I counsel you that ye not meet evil with evil. Rather, if someone strikes the right side of your face, present

the left side. If a person takes your sash, give him your tunic. If someone takes you with himself a mile by force, go with him two miles."[1434] And the Messenger (S) said: "Give to whoever deprives you (of something). Do good to whoever does evil to you." Such patience belongs to the degree of truly righteous.

AS FOR THE THIRD KIND, which is that its beginning and the end are not dependent upon thy will, it is tragedy, such as the death of a child, or financial ruin, the ruin of body parts such as the eyes, ears, hands, and all other heaven-sent calamities, there is no patience more spiritually rewarding than that concerned with (these).

Ibn 'Abbas says: "In the Quran there are three degrees of patience: steadfast patience in devotion increases devotion by three-hundred degrees; then, there are six-hundred degrees for steadfast patience in refraining from that which is forbidden; and third, steadfast patience in refraining from sin at the beginning of a sin, and there are nine-hundred degrees for that." And know that patience in public is the degree of the truly righteous. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said in supplication: "O Lord God, bestow enough certainty upon us so that the tragedies of the world become easy for us." And the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High says: 'If I restore health to one of My servants upon whom I send an affliction and who is patient and does not complain, I shall return a better flesh and skin to him. Or, if I carry him off to My Own mercy, I shall do so.'"

David (A) said: "O Lord God, what is the recompense for him who endures patiently tragedy for Thy sake?" (God) answered: "I shall clothe him in the honored Robe of Faith and never take it back from him." And he said that God Most High says: "I would be ashamed to take a reckoning and send to the Scales (of Divine Justice) or the Tribunal him upon whom I have sent a calamity to his body, or property, or children, and who met it with a beautiful patience."

And the Messenger (S) said: "Waiting patiently for a pleasure[1435] is an act of worship." And he said: "Whoever is afflicted by tragedy should say: '*Verily we belong to God and to Him we shall return;*[1436] *O God, reward me in my calamity and follow it with goodness from it for me.*' God Most High will answer this his supplication." He said: "God

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[1434] Compare: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill them." (Matthew 5:17) "Ye have heard it was said that: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say unto you that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would sue thee and take away thy coat, give him thy cloak also; and if anyone forces you to go with him for one mile, go with him for two miles." (Matthew 5:38-41)

[1435] "a pleasure" (*faraj*): the word often has the connotation of sexual pleasure.

[1436] Q. 2:156.

Most High asked: 'Dost thou know what the reward for a person is whose sight I have taken? That I favor him with his seeing Me.'"

One of the saints had written these words upon a piece of paper: "*Be patient for the judgment of thy Lord; thou art before Our Eyes.*" Whenever some sorrow would touch him, he would take that piece of paper out of his pocket and read it. The wife of Fath Mawsili[1437] fell and broke her fingernail. She laughed. They asked her: "Didst thou not hurt thyself?" She replied: "The joy for the spiritual reward (of the affliction) made me heedless of feeling the pain." And the Messenger (S) said: "One of the (ways of) honoring God Most High is that thou not complain in sickness and that thou conceal thy calamities." Someone says: "I saw Salim,[1438] the client of Abu Hudhayfah, wounded and fallen in battle. I said: 'Dost thou want water?' He said: 'Take my foot and pull me nearer to the enemy. Put water in a pail, for I am fasting. If I survive until nightfall, I shall drink it.'"[1439]

Because of one's weeping or sadness, the virtue of patience is not lost. Instead, it is lost by one's loud wailing, rending of garments, and excessive complaining; for the Messenger (S) wept when his son Ibrahim received the command.[1440] They said: "Didst thou not forbid this (weeping)?" He answered: "No, for this is a mercy. God Most High has mercy upon a person because He is Merciful." It has been said that the beautiful patience is that the afflicted one be not distinguished among others by his rending of clothing, slapping his face, and wailing loudly. All of these are forbidden. Indeed, altering one's states, putting one's pants over one's head, shortening one's turban—all of these are improper. Rather, one should know that a servant (of God) is created without thee and is taken back without thee.

As Rumaysa, the mother of Salim and the wife of Abu Talhah,[1441] said: "My husband was absent and one of our sons (died). I clothed him. When (my husband) returned, he asked: 'How is the sick (boy)?" I answered: 'He has not been better than he is tonight.' Then I brought food and he had his fill. That night, I dressed myself more attractively than usual so that he lay with me[1442] and afterward we performed the greater purification. Then, I said: 'I lent something to such-and-such a neighbor. When I asked for it back, he shouted and cried out and became upset.' (My husband) said: 'That is odd! A very foolish

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[1437] The wife of Fath Mawsili: No other information about her from available standard sources at present. See Note 843 on Fath Mawsili.

[1438] Salīm: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1439] That is, as he was fasting, though wounded, he would not drink water until the sun set (the time of breaking the fast)—if he survived that long.

[1440] "received the command": that is, died.

[1441] Rumaysā, the mother of Salim and the wife of Abu Talhah: No other information about her from available standard sources at present.

[1442] "so that he lay with me": literally, "he gratified his need of me."

neighbor!' Then, I said: 'Our little boy was on loan from God Most High. He asked for his return and took him away.' He said: '*Verily we belong to God and to Him shall we return.*' (Q. 2:156) The next morning, he told the Messenger what had taken place the night before. (The Messenger) said: 'May God Most High bless last night for thee, for it was a great night.' Then the Messenger (S) said: 'I entered heaven on the evening of the Night Journey and I saw Rumaysa, the wife of Abu Talhah.'"

So, from all of this, thou hast learned that the servant of God is at no time without need of patience. Indeed, if one achieves freedom from all appetites and goes into seclusion, in seclusion a hundred thousand temptations and various speculations raise their heads from within one that divert one from the remembrance of God Most High. Even though they be about permitted things, such as the time one has lost, that one's life is one's capital; it has resulted in a total loss. The remedy for this is that one keep oneself busy in continual praises, commemorations, and recitations. And, if one is the same[1443] in performing formal prayer, one should increase one's effort and not leave off except for some work that settles one's heart. It is related in the Traditions: "God Most High is inimical to the idle youth." He said this for the reason that when a young person sits at leisure, his companion may be the temptations of Satan and his soul a nest of wicked thoughts. One is not able to dispel them except by the remembrance of God Most High. He must be busy with some craft, or with a service, or some work that will occupy him. It is not suitable that such a person sit alone. Instead, whoever is unable to do the work of the soul must keep his body busy.

Disclosing the Treatment for Patience

As the kinds of patience are not one, being patiently steadfast for each (kind) has a different difficulty and a different treatment, notwithstanding that all treatment is a compound of knowledge and practice. What we have said in the *Pillar of Destroyers*[1444] is all the medicine for patience. Here we shall expound upon one of them by way of example so that it will be a pattern by which the others may be known analogously.

As we have said, the meaning of patience is the firmness of the religious impulse as opposed to the carnal impulse and there is a kind of war between these two impulses. The plan of whoever sets two people at war with each other and wants one of them to win is to strengthen and aid that one which is supposed to triumph, and to weaken and deprive the

[1443] "the same": that is, diverted from the concentration necessary for meaningful prayer.
[1444] The Third Pillar of this work.

other of aid. Now, when a person is overcome by the craving for sexual intercourse and cannot restrain his genitals—even if he would want to, he cannot keep his eye from looking and his soul from thinking, and he is unable to be patiently steadfast (against it). The remedy for that is first we weaken the carnal motivation, and that is done with three things:

We know that aid for (that craving) comes from good nourishment and food; so we withhold this aid and command fasting so that at night he eats dry bread and he eats little. Of course, he does not eat meat and delicious foods.

Another way is that we shut off that from which the sexual excitement comes. Its excitement is from looking at beautiful visages. He must go into seclusion and restrain his eyes and leave the passing places of women and youths.[1445]

The third is that he quiet (the impulse) with the lawful so that he escapes forbidden passion: he marries so that the carnal appetite becomes quieted. Usually, these lusts cannot be relieved without marriage.

The similitude of this animal soul is the stubborn beast of burden which we satisfy by first withholding its fodder until it is tamed. Another is that we remove the fodder from before it so that it does not see it. Another is that we give it that amount which calms it down. Each of these three treatments is the same for the appetite. It is the weakening of the appetite. However, strengthening the religious motivation is done by two things:

One is that thou whet his avidity for the benefit of wrestling with his appetite by his reflecting upon the Traditions that have come down concerning the spiritual reward for a person who is steadfast and patient. When (his) faith becomes stronger by the fact that the profit of carnal appetite will be for an hour while the profit of steadfast resistance to it will be eternal kingship, the religious motivation gains strength according to the strength of this faith.

The other is that he is made habituated to opposing the appetite little by little until he becomes bold, for when a person desires to become strong, he must test his strength and perform acts of strength. Little by little and bit by bit, he goes farther. A person who wants to wrestle with a strong man must first wrestle with persons who are weaker and test his strength with them to increase (his own) strength. It is for this that the strength of people who do hard work is greater. The treatment for obtaining patience in all affairs is this.

[1445]"Women and youths": literally, "women and children (*kūdakān*)." In such a context, this usually refers to young teenagers.

DISCLOSING THE VIRTUE OF GRATITUDE AND ITS TRUE NATURE

Know that gratitude is a great station and a high degree, but not everyone attains its truth. It is for this that God Most High said: *Few of My servants are thankful.* (Q. 34:13) Iblis sneered at Adam, and said (to God): "*Thou wilt not find most of them grateful (unto Thee).*" (Q. 7:17) Most of them will not be grateful.

Know that the attributes we have called "the Delivers" are of two kinds: One is in the preliminaries of the way of religion and is not in itself an objective, such as repentance, patience, fear, asceticism, and preventing public immorality. These are all means to another end, which is the way of religion. The second kind is the objectives and ends, such as love, zeal, satisfaction, the Unity (of God), and trust. Gratitude is among these. Whatever is the object remains in the Hereafter. As He said: *And the conclusion of their supplication shall be: Praise be to God the Lord of the worlds.* (Q. 10:10) Thus, it became necessary that it ought to be discussed at the end of the book, but because gratitude is related to patience, it is being discussed here.

The sign of greatness of its degree is that God Most High has made it the companion of His Own remembrance, saying: *Therefore remember Me, I shall remember you. Give thanks to Me, and reject Me not.* (Q. 2:152) And the Messenger (S) said: "The degree of the person who eats food and is grateful is the degree of the one who fasts and is patient." And he said: "On the Day of Resurrection it will be called out: "*Where are the praisers?*" No one will stand up except the one who has expressed gratitude to God Most High in all circumstances." When the verse was revealed about the prohibition of the laying up of treasure, 'Umar (R) said: "O Messenger of God, then what should we accumulate of wealth?" (The Messenger) answered: "A tongue remembering (God), a grateful soul, a patient body, and a believing wife." That is, be content with these things of the world, for a believing wife is a companion in leisure from which remembrance (of God), gratitude, and patience result.

Ibn Mas'ud says: "Gratitude is one half of faith." 'Ata says: "I was with 'Ayishah and I asked her to relate some of the wonders of the states of the Messenger (S) to me. She said: 'Which of his states was not wonderful? One night he came to me in sleeping clothes so that his naked body touched my body. Then he said: 'O 'Ayishah, let me go and worship God.' I said: 'I want to be close to thee, but go.' He arose and took some water from the water skin and purified himself and poured out a little water. Then he stood up and performed formal prayer, weeping copiously, until Bilal came to go to the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer. I said: 'God Most High has forgiven all of thy sins; why dost thou weep?' He said: 'Then, I would not be a grateful servant. Why should I not weep while this verse was being revealed to me? *Lo! In the*

creation of the heavens and the earth and in the difference of night and day are tokens for the understanding, such as remember God standing, sitting, and reclining. (Q. 3:190-191)

That is, those who possess understanding lying down, sitting, and standing busy themselves with the remembrance (of God) and contemplate the wonders of the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth weep in gratitude at the degree which they have obtained, from joy, not from fear. As it is related: "One of the messengers passed by a small rock from which abundant waters were flowing forth. God Most High gave it the power of speech and it said: 'Since this verse had been revealed: *Its fuel is of men and stones*, (Q. 2:24)[1446]—men and stones will be the fuel of hell—I have been weeping like this.' (That messenger) said: 'O Lord God, turn this fear into faith,' and this supplication was fulfilled. Another time, he passed by that stone, and it was still pouring forth abundant water. He asked: 'Now, why art thou weeping?' (The stone) answered: 'That weeping was from fear; this weeping is from joy.'" And this is a parable for the human soul which is harder than stone. It must weep, sometimes from sorrow and sometimes from joy, so that it may become soft.

The True Nature of Gratitude

Know that we have said that the stations of religion come with three fundamentals: knowledge, state, and deed. Knowledge is the basis, and from it, state arises; and action arises from state. Just as the knowledge of gratitude is the recognition of the blessings of God, the state is the joy of the soul for that blessing, and action is the employment of those blessings for that which is the desideratum of God. That action is both connected with the soul, with the tongue, and with the body. So long as all of this is not clear, the true nature of gratitude will not be clear.

AS FOR KNOWLEDGE (of gratitude), it is that thou recognize that every blessing thou possessest is from God, may He be praised and exalted! No one is His partner in this. So long as thou seest anyone in the midst of causes and thou lookest at him and see things as (originating) from him, (thy) knowledge of gratitude (to God) is not perfect. For, when a king bestows a robe of honor upon thee, but thou knowest that it was through the favor of a minister, thy gratitude to the king will not be unalloyed. Indeed, some of it will be to the minister. Thy joy will not all be in the king. Instead, some of it will be for the minister.

[1446] This is a phrase from the verse. The full text is: *And if ye do it not* (produce a chapter like a Quranic chapter) *and ye can never do it - then guard yourselves against the fire prepared for the disbelievers, whose fuel is of men and stones.* (Q. 2:24)

However, if thou knowest that the robe of honor comes to thee by the king's patent, and the signature is made with pen and paper, this does not bring a diminishment (of gratitude to the king), because thou knowest that the pen and paper are utilized and that they had no control over anything. Indeed, if the treasurer also delivered it to thee, there is no loss (of gratitude to the king), because thou knowest that he had no part in it, that he was utilized (as the means of delivery). He cannot oppose what has been commanded (by the king). If he had not been commanded (to do so), he would not have delivered it. He is utilized, just as is the pen. In the same way, if thou perceivest the blessings upon the earth as from the rain, and thou perceivest the rain as from a cloud, and thou perceiveest the salvation of a ship as from a steady wind, thine expression of gratitude for that is not complete. But, when thou learnest that the clouds, the rain, the wind, the sun, the moon, the stars, and everything that is—all are in the grasp of the power of God subjugated in the same manner that a pen is (subjugated) in the hand of a scribe, where the pen has absolutely no power of discretion, this (knowledge) does not bring any diminishment in gratitude (to God).

If a blessing reaches thee that a human being gives thee and thou thinkest it is from him, this is ignorance and a veil (hiding) the station of gratitude. Thou shouldst know, rather, that he gave thee that because God Most High sent him an agent that compelled him to decide to do that. However much he would have wanted to oppose that agent, he would be unable to do so. If he had been able to, he would not have given thee a single grain. The agent is that motive that fell into his heart and kept it before him: "Thy welfare in religion and the world lies in that thou give it to him," so that he, eager to achieve his own aim in this world and the next, gave it to thee. In reality, he gave it to himself, for he made it a means for his own end; but God Most High gave it to thee because He sent him such an agent. God does not have any desire in exchange for that.

Thus, when thou truly recognizest that all men are like the king's treasurer, and the treasurer is like the pen—nothing is in the power of anyone save that which they are commanded to do—then thou can be grateful for these blessings to God Most High. Indeed, this spiritual insight itself is the essence of gratitude. As Moses (A) said in conversation with God: "O my God! Thou didst create Adam with Thine Own Hand of Power and Thou didst do such-and-such with him. How did he thank Thee?" (God) said: "He knew that it was from Me, and his knowing is thankfulness to Me."

And know that the divisions of the kinds of spiritual knowledge of faith are many: The first is sanctification, that thou know that God, may He be honored and exalted, is pure and free of all attributes of created things and all that comes to thought and imagination. The

expression of this is: "*Glory be to God!*"[1447] The second is that thou know that He is in this purity unique and He has no partner. The expression of this is: "*There is no god but God!*"[1448] The third is that thou know that everything that exists, all of it, is from Him and is His blessing. The expression of this condition is: "*Praise be to God!*"[1449] This is beyond both of the other two because both kinds of those kinds of spiritual knowledge appear beneath it. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "'*Glory be to God!*' is ten good deeds, "*There is no god but God!*' is twenty good deeds, and '*Praise be to God!*' is thirty good deeds." Those good deeds are not the movements of the tongue with those words. Rather, those good deeds are the spiritual insights appearing in the soul that those words express. This is the meaning of the knowledge of gratitude.

AS FOR THE STATE OF GRATITUDE, it is the joy that appears in the soul from this spiritual knowledge. For everyone who sees a blessing from someone rejoices in that. However, this joy may have three aspects:

ONE is that if a king will go on a journey, he gives one of his own horses to a servant. If that servant becomes happy, it is because he was in need of a horse and he has gotten it. This is not gratitude to the king, for (the servant) would have become just as happy had he found the horse in the desert.

ANOTHER is the joy that comes from recognizing the favor of the king with respect to him and he starts to hope for further favors. This joy is (linked) to the benefactor, but is not for the benefactor. Instead, it is because of the expectation of (more) favors. This is counted as gratitude, but it is lacking.

THE THIRD DEGREE is the joy that comes because he is able to sit upon the horse and go in attendance on the king so that he may see (the king). He wants nothing more from him except this. This is joy in the king, and it is the entirety of gratitude.

It is the same for a person to whom God has given some blessing and is gladdened by that blessing, not by the Benefactor. This is not gratitude. If he were delighted with the Benefactor—but because (the gift) was the proof of His satisfaction and favor—this is gratitude, but it is lacking. If it were because that blessing became the cause of leisure for religion so that he could engage in acts of worship and study, and seek proximity to His Presence, this would be the perfection of gratitude. Its

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[1447] "*Glory be to God!*": *Subhāna-llāh!*
[1448] "*There is no god but God!*: *Lā ilāha illā-llāh!*
[1449] "*Praise be to God!*": *Al-ḥamdu-lillāh*

sign is that he is sorrowed by every worldly thing that distracts him from His service and from Him. Instead, he recognizes the withdrawal (of a blessing) as a blessing and gives thanks for that. Moreover, he does not take joy in anything that is not his helper in the way of religion.

It is for this that Shibli, may God have mercy upon him, said: "Gratitude is that thou dost not see the favor; thou seest the Giver of the favor." For anyone whose pleasure is nothing other than in the things perceptible to the senses—such as the carnal appetite, the eyes, and belly, and the genitalia—gratitude is not possible. Therefore, there is nothing lower than the second degree, for the first degree is not counted as gratitude.

AS FOR THE ACT OF GRATITUDE, it is with the soul, the tongue, and the body:

AS FOR THE SOUL, it is that one wish well for all mankind and not envy anyone for his blessings.

AS FOR THE TONGUE, it is that it one be modest and utter: "Praise be to God!" often and that it express to the Benefactor joy for blessings in all circumstances. The Messenger (S) asked someone: "How art thou?" He replied: "Fine." (The Messenger) asked (again): "How art thou?" (The man) replied: "Fine, praise be to God!" (The Messenger) said: "That was what I was seeking." The desire of the forefathers who used to ask each other how they were was that the answer be (an expression of) gratitude. Both the speaker and questioner share in the spiritual reward (of that exchange). Whoever complains becomes an offender, even if he is in affliction. What is more unbecoming than that one complain of the Lord of the seven heavens and the seven climes to an unfortunate person who does not have the power to do anything? Instead, one should give thanks for the affliction because it may happen that that affliction will be the cause of one's (spiritual) happiness, if one is able to be patient a while.

AS FOR THE BODY, it is that each member is a blessing for one. Thou shouldst employ (the body) for that which it was created, and all were created for the Hereafter. What He desires from thee is that thou occupy thyself with that. When thou hast used His blessings for His desired end, thou hast shown gratitude even though there is no part or portion for Him in that. For He is above such needs. The parable of this is the king who favors a slave and that slave is far away from him. He sends a horse and the provisions for the journey so that (the slave) may come to him and, because of proximity to (the royal) presence, become great and achieve a high rank. For the king, his proximity or remoteness

with respect to himself are both the same, for in his kingdom nothing is increased or reduced by (the slave), but he desires the good for the slave. For, when the king is generous, he desires good fortune for his people—for them, not for himself.

Therefore, if that slave mounts the horse and heads for the royal presence, and uses those provisions on the way, he has shown his gratitude for the favor of the horse and the provisions. But if he mounts the horse and turns his back on the royal presence and goes farther away, he has shown ingratitude. If he delays and goes neither closer nor farther away, this is also ingratitude, but not to the degree of the former. And it is the same when a servant of God uses the favors of God Most High in obedience to Him so that he may attain the degree of proximity to the Divine Presence. (In this), he is showing gratitude, and if he expends (the favors) in sin so that he becomes more distant, it is ingratitude. If he delays or he uses them in lawful comfort, it is also ingratitude, even though its degree is not that of the former. When it is clear that gratitude for each blessing lies in that one use it for (achieving) the desire[1450] of God Most High, no one can do this except a person whose desire it is to discriminate between the aim of God Most High and that which He dislikes. This is a complex and subtle study to which we have referred briefly in this book. If a person desires more (about it), he should seek it in *The Revival*. No more than this is possible in this book.

Disclosing That Ingratitude for Every Blessing Is That It Turn One away From His Wisdom and Not Be Used in the Manner for Which It Was Created

Know that spending a blessing of God Most High in what pleases God is gratitude, but in what He dislikes is ingratitude. What He likes and what He dislikes cannot be known except through the Religious Doctrine and Law. Therefore, it is a prerequisite that a blessing be used in devotion, as is the command. However, for the perspicacious there is a way to understand the underlying purpose[1451] of affairs with pondering and reasoning, and by the way of inspiration. It is possible for a person to recognize that the underlying purpose for the creation of clouds is rain. In the creation of rain, there are plants; in the creation of plants, there is the nourishment of animals. The underlying purpose in the creation of the sun is the appearance of day and night so that night is for rest and day for livelihood.

It is clear that everyone knows these and their like, but there are many underlying purposes in the sun beyond that, which not everyone

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[1450] "desire" (*maḥbūb*): in this case, the thing desired or loved. Of course, *maḥbūb* is also a term of endearment meaning "beloved."

[1451] "underlying purpose" (*ḥikmat*), or "divine mystery."

can apprehend. There are numerous stars in the sky for which not everyone knows what the underlying purpose in their creation is. Just as with respect his own limbs, everyone knows that the hands are for grasping, the feet are for walking, the eyes for seeing, but he does not know what his liver or spleen is for. He does not know for what reason his eye was created in ten layers. Therefore, some of underlying purposes are subtle and others even subtler, which are understood only by specialists. A discussion of this would be lengthy.

This much is necessary, that one must know that a human being has been created for the Hereafter, not for this world. Whatever is a human being's portion in this world has been created to be his provision for (the journey) to the Hereafter. One must not suppose that everything has been created for him, lest he say about something in which he sees no benefit for himself: "Why was it created? What wisdom is there in their creation?" (Or) lest he say: "Why were flies created? Why were snakes created?" He must realize that ants are also perplexed as to why thou wast created so that thou step upon them and kill them carelessly. Its perplexity is the same as thy perplexity. Indeed, because of the perfection of the Divine munificence, it is necessary that whatever is possible to come into existence of animals, plants, minerals, etc., come into existence in the best manner of all species and types. Then, everything which each one requires appropriate to its necessity and need and for its beauty and adornment, comes into existence; for there, there is no restriction or stinting.

And the reason for anything's not coming into existence in perfection and beauty is that there is no place for its acceptance because there is some attribute working in opposition to it. It may be that in that opposition there is a purpose for some other work: for it is not possible for fire to accept the coolness and delicacy of water, because heat does not accept cold, as it is its opposite. Too, its heat is the point (of its existence). Eliminating (that quality) from it would also be a deficiency. In fact, the moisture from which He created the fly He created because the fly is more perfect than that moisture. The moisture is (potentially) capable of that perfection. (The realization of that potential) was not held back from it, for such a restriction would be stinting. (The fly) is more perfect because in it are life, power, sensation, movement, and strange shapes and organs that are not in that moisture.

He did not create a human being from (that moisture) because it did not have the basis or the (potential) capability for that. In it, there were attributes that were in opposition to the attributes which are the conditions for the creation of a human being. However, He withheld nothing that was necessary for the fly: wings,[1452] legs,[1453] eyes, mouth,

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[1452] "wings" (*par wa bāl*): literally, "feathers and wings."

head, stomach, a place for food to enter, a place for food to stop and be digested, and a place for its excretion. He did not withhold anything which was necessary for its body to be small, delicate, and light. Because it needed sight and its head was small, on which lidded eyes would not be possible, He created for it two lidless beads, like two mirrors, so that images could be displayed in them and it could see. Since eyelids are for the purpose of preventing dust from settling on the eyes, (the fly) sweeps it away. When the mirror is tarnished and since it does not have eyelids, He created two extra arms by which those two beads are swept clean every so often and are cleaned. Then, the two arms rub together and brush each other off.

The point of saying this is so that thou know that divine mercy, grace, kindness, and favor are general, not reserved to mankind. For, every worm and gnat has been given that which it should have in perfection. Even the gnat has been fashioned[1454] in the same manner that an elephant has. It has not been created for a human being, because it was created for itself, just as thou hast been created for thyself. Thou didst not have a relationship or some patronage before creation by which thou wert deserving of a creation that others did not have. Instead, at that time, the sea of Divine Generosity was an ocean in which there was every thing. One of those things is thou, another is an ant, another a fly, another an elephant, and another a bird. It is thus, notwithstanding that the imperfect among them are sacrificed for the perfect, and (since) a human being is more perfect than (anything else) which is on the earth, more things have necessarily been sacrificed for him.[1455]

Moreover, beneath the earth and at the bottom of the sea there is many a thing of which man has no portion, but which has been created externally and internally with the same careful attention. Perhaps, the beauty and design on its exterior is such that man would be incapable of (drawing) that. Now, this is related to the studies of the seas in which most scholars are weak, and the discussion of this would be prolonged.

The point of this is that thou should not call thyself one of the chosen of the Divine Presence so that thou measure everything according to thyself and thou say about that in which there is no benefit (for thee): "Why was this created? There is no purpose in it!" When thou hast understood that the ant was not created for thee, know that the moon, the sun, the stars, the heavens, and the angels, all of these also were not created for thee, even though thou hast some benefit from them; just as the fly was not created for thee, even though thou have some benefit

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[1453] "legs" (*dast wa pāy*): literally, "arms and legs, that is "limbs.""

[1454] "in the same manner": that is, with the same care and attention to its needs.

[1455] During this discussion, al-Ghazzali uses the terms "perfect" and "imperfect" forms of life, whereas today we would probably say "higher" and "lower" forms of life. Do we see a theory of the survival of the fittest in this passage?

from it. For, it has been chosen to eat all that is unpleasant to thee and would putrefy, in order to lessen the unpleasant stench. The butcher was not created for the fly, even though there is a benefit from him for the fly. Thy supposition that the sun rises for thy sake every day is like the supposition of the fly that imagines that the butcher goes to his shop every day for its sake so that it will be able to eat its fill of blood and unpleasantnesses. Just as a butcher himself turns to other work so that he does not remember the fly, even though the leavings of his work is the life and sustenance of the fly, the sun is turned to the service of the Divine Presence in its circumambulations and movements and does not remember thee, even though the leavings of its light enable thine eyes to see and the earth is tempered by the leavings of its temperament so that the plants which are thy food may grow. Therefore, there is for us in the purpose of creation that which has no connection with thee and, with respect to the meaning of gratitude, is not useful. There is also much that is related to thee, all of which cannot be mentioned. We shall give a few examples:

One is that eyes have been created for thee for two things: one is that thou know the way to satisfy thy needs in this world, the other is that thou contemplate the wonders crafted by God Most High so that thou may recognize His greatness. When thou lookest at someone not of the prohibited degrees,[1456] thou hast become guilty of ingratitude for the blessing of the eyes. Indeed, the blessing of the eyes is not complete without the sun, for without it, they do not see. The sun is not possible without heaven and earth because night and day appear from heaven and earth. And yet thou, with that one glance (at the forbidden) hast been ungrateful for the blessings of the eyes and the sun; indeed, for the blessings of the heavens and the earth. It is for this that it is related in the Traditions: "Heaven and earth curse whoever commits a sin."

Thou hast been given hands so that thou may make ready thine own affairs with them: in order to eat, wash thyself, and the like. When thou usest them to commit a sin, thou hast become guilty of ingratitude for their blessing. Indeed, for example, if thou cleanest thyself after a bowel movement with thy right hand or take the Scripture[1457] in thy left hand, thou art guilty of ingratitude. Thou hast violated that which is desired by God Most High, and that is equity. Equity is that the noble be for the noble and the ignoble be for ignoble. Of thy two hands, one is usually stronger than the other, that is the more noble.[1458] Thine acts are of two kinds: some are lowly and others noble. One must perform that which is noble with the right (hand) and that which is ignoble with the

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[1456] "someone not of the prohibited degrees" (*nā maḥramī*): someone (of the opposite sex) with whom marriage (and therefore sexual intercourse) is possible.

[1457] "the Scripture" (*muṣḥaf*): that is, the Holy Quran.

[1458] This refers to the right-handedness with which most people are born.

left (hand), in order to act equitably.[1459] If not, like an animal, thou hast eliminated purpose and equity.

If thou spittest in the direction of prayer, thou hast been ungrateful for the blessing of the directions and the blessing of the direction of prayer. The directions are all equal, but God Most High has changed one of them into the direction of prayer for thy welfare so that thou may turn in that direction when thou worshippest, in order that it may be the cause of thy firmness and tranquillity, And He added to that the House[1460] which he placed (there) for this purpose.

Thou performest ignoble acts such as voiding wastes, spitting, and noble acts, such as the obligatory purification and formal prayer. When thou holdest all equal, thou hast lived as an animal and thou hast negated what is due for the blessing of intellect, in which equity and purpose appear, and what is due the blessing of the direction of prayer. If, for example, thou breakest the branch of a tree and throw it down needlessly, or thou tossest away a bud, thou hast negated the blessing of thy hand and the blessing of the tree, for that branch had been created and in it there are veins that draw nourishment to itself. In it, the capacity to take nourishment and other capacities have been created. It is for a task for which it becomes useful when it reaches maturity. It is ingratitude to block those channels (of nourishment), except out of necessity for the perfection of thine own needs. In that case, its perfection is sacrificed for thy perfection. For, it is equity that the imperfect be sacrificed for the perfect.

If thou breakest the property of another, it is ingratitude even if thou needest it, because the need of the owner precedes and takes precedence over thy need, however much that in reality a servant (of God) has no property. Rather, the world is like a spread table and the blessings of the world are as the foods placed upon it. The servants of God Most High are like the guests at that table that is the property of no one. But, since each morsel is not promised to all, it is not proper that one guest seize whatever another takes in his hand from him to put into his mouth. The property of the servants (of God) is nothing more than this. As for the guest who is unable to seize any food and put it some place where the no one else can get at it, it is not right for anyone to have anything to do with more than he needs for himself and place it in a cupboard and not give it to the needy.

However, this is not comprehended in the obvious opinion because each individual's need is not known. If we open this path,

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[1459] Because the left hand is used to wash the privates after voiding urine or excrement while food is eaten with the right hand, the right hand is reserved for noble tasks, such as touching the Quran, and shaking hands; while the left is used for the lowly or more ignoble functions of life.

[1460] "the House": the Ka'bah at Makkah, which is the direction of formal prayer.

everyone will take the goods of others and say: "Thou hast no need of this." Therefore, we have left this to rule of necessity, though it is contrary to wisdom. The prohibition against the accumulation of property has come for this, especially with respect to the hoarding of foodstuffs that are the people's sustenance. Whoever hoards in order to sell at a high price is under the curse of God Most High, for it is the people's sustenance. When a business is made out of that, (food) is blocked and does not reach the needy quickly. This is also forbidden with regard to gold and silver, because God Most High created gold and silver for two basic purposes:

One is in order to manifest the value of goods, because not everyone knows how many slaves a horse is worth, or how many garments a slave is worth. These must be sold for each other. Thus, there is the need for something by the standard of which all may be understood. He created gold and silver so that they would be like a magistrate disclosing the value of every thing. Anyone who hoards them in a treasury is as though he has imprisoned a magistrate of the Muslims, and anyone who makes urns and ewers of them is as though he has commanded the magistrate of the Muslims to porterage and weaving. For, the purpose of a ewer is to hold water and it could have been made of clay or copper.

The other basic purpose is that these two materials are valued and everything may be obtained by means of them. Everyone desires them, for whoever possesses gold possesses everything. Perhaps a person has a garment but is in need of food. The person who has food does not have a need for a garment to sell[1461] (the food) for it. God Most High created gold and silver and made them valuable so that business may be carried on by their means so that those who do not have any (goods) may obtain their needs through them. When gold begins to be sold for gold and silver for silver, so that there is a profit in them, these two (precious metals) become engaged with each other and are tied to each other so that they are no longer the means of other transactions.

So, do not suppose that there is in the Religious Law anything that is other than (God's) purpose and justice. Rather, everything that there is (in it) is as it should be. However, some of these purposes are so subtle that no one knows them other than the prophets. Others no one knows except the great religious scholars. Any scholar who has taken up his task by following the superficial is deficient and he is close to the (level of understanding of the) common folk.

When (a good religious scholar) comes to know these underlying purposes, those (things) which the jurisprudents hold to be repugnant, he

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[1461] "sell" (*furūshad*): In this context, it means "barter, exchange."

holds to be forbidden, so that when one of the great put on his left shoe first by mistake, he paid so many donkey-loads of wheat in atonement! But if one of the common folk breaks the branch of a tree, or spits in the direction of prayer, or picks up the Scripture with his left hand, we do not object so much for this lapse, because he is one of the common folk, and the common folk are closer to beasts and do not have the patience to observe these rules. His circumstances are so remote from underlying purposes that such niceties do not appear important to him. For, if a person sells a freedman on Friday at the time of the call to formal obligatory prayer, he is not chastised because a business transaction at that time is disapproved of, but because the crime of selling a freedman overwhelms that disapproval. If a person has a bowel movement in the prayer niche (of a mosque) with his back to the direction of prayer, there is no room left for the chastisement due, because he turned his back toward the direction of prayer for his bowel movement when the crime (of using the prayer niche for a bowel movement) itself is so disgusting that that nicety is not an issue. Leniency with the actions of the common folk is of this kind. The superficial opinion is for the commons. However, the wayfarer on the path to the Hereafter must not look at the superficial opinion but observe all of these niceties so that he may become closer to the angels in justice and purpose. If not, in his abandonment (of the world), he is close to the brutish beasts, like a commoner.

Disclosing That Which is the True Nature of Blessings

Know that that which God Most High has created with respect to a human being is of four kinds:

THE FIRST is that it is beneficial both in this world and in the next world, such as knowledge and a good character. The true blessings in this world are these.

THE SECOND is that which is harmful in both worlds, such as ignorance and a bad character. The true afflictions of this world are these.

THE THIRD is that it is a comfort in this world and a sorrow in the next world, such as an amplitude of worldly comforts and the enjoyment in them. These are blessings in the opinion of fools and afflictions in the opinion of the wise. This is like the hungry person who must have honey, but in it, there is poison. The one who is a fool does not know that there is poison in it and counts it a blessing; his greed conceals the harm. The one who is wise knows that it is an affliction and harmful.

THE FOURTH is that there is in it sorrow in this world, but a comfort in the next world, such as asceticism and opposition to the carnal appetites. To the possessors of spiritual insight this blessing is as bitter

medicine to the intelligent sick, but it is an affliction in the opinion of fools.

Excursus: [It Is Proper That Some Thing Be a Blessing for One Person and a Detriment to Another.]

Know that most of the goods of the world are mixed. There is both evil and good in them, but anything is a blessing (when) its benefit exceeds its detriment. This varies according to individuals. Wealth, in an adequate amount, is more of a benefit than a harm. (However), in that which exceeds sufficiency, there is more harm than benefit with respect to most persons. But there is the person for whom a little is also harmful. The reason for this is that the greed for more overcomes him, while if he had not had anything, he would not have desired anything. And there is the person who is perfect; having much does not harm him because he can aid the needy at the time of their need. So, by this thou knowest that it is proper that a thing be both a blessing with respect to one person and a detriment with respect to another.

Excursus: [The Most Complete Good Is Knowledge and the Most Complete Evil Is Ignorance.]

Know that whatever people consider to be a good is not beyond three states: Either it is pleasant at the moment, or it is beneficial in the future, or it is good in itself. Whatever they consider evil is either immediately unpleasant, or is harmful in the future, or is in itself unseemly. Therefore, the most complete good is that in which all three aspects are collected: it is pleasant and good, and is beneficial as well. This is nothing other than knowledge and wisdom. The most complete evil is ignorance, which is unpleasant and ugly, and is harmful as well.

Know that nothing is more pleasant than knowledge, but only for the person whose soul is not ailing. And know that ignorance is painful and unpleasant at the same time. Whoever does not know something and wants to know it perceives the pain of his ignorance. And ignorance is unseemly, but this unseemliness does not appear (externally) on him; it is within the soul. It has distorted the form of the soul, and this is uglier than external ugliness.

There is the thing that is beneficial in the future but is unpleasant, such as cutting off a finger to prevent the total ruin of a hand. And there is the thing that is beneficial in one way but harmful in another, such as when one throws goods into the sea—when the ship is about to sink—in order to save oneself.[1462]

[1462] By lightening its load.

EXCURSUS: [THERE ARE THREE DEGREES OF DELIGHTS AND PLEASURES.]

People say thus: that everything which is good is a blessing. Delights and pleasures are of three degrees:

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is that which is the more ignoble, and that is the pleasure of the stomach and the genitalia. People know these best and occupy themselves with them. Whatever they seek, they do for their sake. The proof of their baseness is that all animals are partners with (man) in these, and (the animals) exceed man in them. The eating and copulation of animals is considerable. Indeed, the fly, the ant, and the worm, are all equal to man in this and his partner. When a person gives himself entirely to these (pursuits), he suffices for the degree of the insects of the earth.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the pleasure of victory, chieftainship and the overcoming of others. It is the faculty of anger. Even though it is nobler than the pleasures of the stomach and the genitalia, it is still ignoble, for some of the animals share in this, even though all do not. But among the lions and leopards there is that greed for pride, victory and overcoming (others).

THE THIRD DEGREE is knowledge, wisdom, and the spiritual knowledge of God Most High and the wonders of His handiwork. This is noble, for no animal shares in these. Indeed, these are the attributes of the angels; rather, the attributes of God Most High! Anyone whose pleasure lies in these and in nothing other than these is perfect. Anyone who does not have any pleasure in them is wholly deficient. Rather, he is ailing and is on his way to perdition. Most believers are of these two kinds. Rather, they obtain pleasure in both the former and the latter, and in other things as well, such as the pleasure of chieftainship and carnality. However, for one who is dominated by the pleasure of spiritual knowledge, that (pleasure) veils and overcomes the others. Whoever is overcome by the other—and this be by effort—is nearer the degree of deficiency, but if one strives so that the other triumphs—that is the meaning of the preponderance of the scale-pan of good deeds.

DISCLOSING ALL OF THE KINDS OF BLESSING AND THEIR DEGREES

Know that the true blessing is the (spiritual) happiness of the Hereafter, and that is a desirable end in itself, not for any other blessing which lies beyond it. It is four things:

One is an eternal life that cannot be affected by annihilation.

The second is the joy that is not mixed with sorrow.

The third is a knowledge and a revelation that are free of the dark turbidity of ignorance.

The fourth is a freedom from want that cannot be invaded by poverty or need. In short, this comes with the continual witnessing of the Divine Presence and the Godhead, which are not affected by boredom or decrease. This is a true blessing, and everything we count as a blessing in this world is for its sake and a means and a way to it. It is not the desired end in itself. The perfect blessing is that from which *that* is desired, not anything else. For this the Messenger (S) said: "*Life is the life of the Hereafter.*" The Messenger (S) said this once in the extremity of sorrow to console himself for the misery of the world, and he said it once in the extremity of happiness during the Farewell Pilgrimage[1463] in which his task had achieved perfection and all the people had turned their faces towards him while he was sitting on a camel. He was being asked about the acts of the Pilgrimage. When he saw that that was over, he uttered those words so that his soul would not be deflected by the pleasures of the world. Someone said: "O Lord God, *I ask of Thee the perfect blessing.*" The Messenger (S) heard what he had said and asked (the man): "Dost thou know what the perfect blessing is?" (The man) answered: "No." (The Messenger) said: "It is that thou enter Paradise."

AS FOR THE BLESSINGS OF THE WORLD, whatever is not a means to the Hereafter is not truly a blessing, and that which is the means to the Hereafter is divided among sixteen things: four are in the soul, four in the body, four external to the body, and four common to the twelve.

As for the four that are in the soul, they are the knowledge of spiritual contemplation, the knowledge of mutual relations, chastity, and a just balance.

As for the knowledge of spiritual contemplation, it is to know God Most High and His attributes and His angels and messengers.

As for the knowledge of mutual relations, it is that which we have discussed in this book: the obstacles on the path, as we have said in *The Pillar of the Destroyers*;[1464] the provisions for the path, as in *The Pillar of Mutual Relations*;[1465] and the stages of the path, as in *The Pillar of the Deliverers*.[1466] All are completely made known in this book.

[1463] "the Farewell Pilgrimage" (*Hajj al-Widā'*): perhaps the climax and culmination of the Prophet's life. It took place a few months before his death in AH11/632CE. All Arabia had accepted Islam, the Islamic commonwealth was established, and the stage was now set for Islam to become a world religion. The Farewell Pilgrimage is the model for all subsequent pilgrimages. It was in the Prophet's sermon at Arafat that what is almost certainly the last verse of the Quran was revealed, signifying the completion of his mission: *This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you and have chosen for you as (your) religion Islam.* (Q. 5:3)

[1464] The Third Pillar.

[1465] The Second Pillar.

[1466] This Pillar.

As for chastity, it is that one attains the perfection of a good character in the shattering of both the power of carnal passion and the power of anger.

A just balance is that one not eliminate appetite and anger, for that would be detrimental, but one should not permit them to master one so as to go one's head, for that would be an inundation. Instead, they should be weighed with sound scales, as He said: *That ye exceed not the measure, but observe the measure strictly, nor fall short thereof.* (Q. 55:8-9)

All of these four are not complete save with the blessings that are of the body, and they are four: good health, strength, beauty, and a long life. As to the need for health, strength, and a long life for the happiness of the Hereafter, it is not hidden, for without them thou dost not obtain the perfection of knowledge, work, a good character, and the moral excellences in the human soul, which we have mentioned.

However, there is less need for beauty, but the requirements of a good-looking person are more readily satisfied. (Personal) beauty is like rank and wealth in that respect. Whatever is useful for the important wants of the world may be of use in the affair of the Hereafter, since the provisions of the world are the cause of the leisure of the Hereafter: the world is the farmland of the Hereafter. Also, a good exterior is an indication of a good interior; for that is also a favor obtained at the moment of birth. Usually, when one is adorned externally, internally one is also adorned with a good nature. It is for this that it has been said: "Thou dost not see any ugly person whose countenance is not more beautiful than that which is inside him." The Messenger (S) said: "Ask your needs from those of pleasant appearance." And 'Umar said: "When the imams for leading formal prayer are equal in knowledge of the Law, recitation (of the Quran), and piety, choose the best-looking one. Know that we do not desire this handsomeness to arouse passions, for that is a trait of women, but that he be of good stature, with regular features, so that souls and eyes will not be repulsed by him."

As for the blessings needed that are external to the body, they are: wealth, rank, family,[1467] household,[1468] party,[1469] tribe, and great lineage.

[1467] "family" (*ahl*): wives, also family in the sense of the extended family including, besides one's own wife and children, relatives such as aunts uncles, cousins, in-laws, etc.

[1468] "household" (*haram*): or "harem." This term, which conjures up such florid fantasies in the Western mind, simply refers to something private or restricted: not necessarily a seraglio. Here, it refers to wives and children. It is also the term used to describe the great mosque precincts of Makkah, Madinah, Jerusalem, etc. In his exposition of these terms below, Ghazzali omits "household," incorporating it into the category of "family."

[1469] "party" (*gurūh*): or group. A group of men one may count on for support, both from among one's relatives and from other clans. The people one associates with in some

The need of the Hereafter for wealth is from the aspect that how can a person who does not have anything, and is everyday engaged in the search for food, study and do anything (else)? Therefore, an adequate amount of wealth is a religious blessing.

As for rank, that is needed because whoever does not have it is always in shame and disdain. He is not safe from the attack of enemies. But, there is harm in an excess of wealth and rank. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever rises in the morning and is in good health, secure, and has the day's food, it is as though he has the whole world." This cannot happen without rank and money. And the Messenger (S) said: "*How good an aid to devoutness to God is wealth!*" (Sufficient) wealth is a good help to piety.

As for family and offspring, they are a blessing in religion, for a family is the cause of rest from working much and a security against the evils of the carnal appetite. Concerning this, the Messenger (S) said: "An honorable wife is a good helper for religion." And 'Umar asked: "What of the world's wealth should I amass?" (The Messenger) replied: "A tongue remembering (God), a grateful soul, and a believing wife." Children are the cause of good supplications after death and a help in life. Good children are like a man's hands, feet, feathers, and wings; they render works successful. This is a blessing if one is wary of their detriment, which is the ambition on their behalf that turns one to the world.

As for an honorable lineage, it is a blessing because leadership[1470] is reserved for those of the line of Quraysh. The Messenger (S) said: "*Choose for your seeds the suitable; beware of the greenery of manure.*" He has said: "Sow your seed in a suitable place and beware of the greenery that is on top of a dung heap." They asked: "What is that?" He answered: "A beautiful woman from a family of unknown origin." Know that with this lineage he did not intend mastery of the world; rather, the religious lineage that comes with the righteous and the scholarly, for this too is a blessing. Character usually spreads from its origin: the righteousness of the root is an indication of the righteousness of the branch, as God Most High said: *And their father had been righteous...* (Q. 18:82)

And those four blessing that are common to all, they are: guidance, rectitude, confirmation, and finding guidance. There is no blessing without its divine grace. The meaning of divine grace is the setting up of a concordance between the decree of God Most High and the desire of the servant of God. It is both in evil and in good. However,

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enterprise which serves to bind them together, such as military units, caravans, and the Pilgrimage.

[1470] "leadership" (*imāmat*): In this context, it refers to the caliphate, that is, the leadership of the entire Islamic world.

the term has customarily come to refer to the joining of the desire of the servant of God and the (divine) decree in which lies the servant's well-being. This is fulfilled with four things:

THE FIRST IS GUIDANCE of which no one is not in need, for if a person is seeking the happiness of the Hereafter and if he does not know the way, but knows the wrong way, what is the profit? Therefore, the creation of things without guidance is not enough. For this, God Most High put (us) under an obligation for both, saying: *[(Moses) said: Our Lord] is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright;* (Q. 20:50) and He said: *(God) is He Who measures, then guides.* (Q. 87:3) And know that there are three degrees of guidance:

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is that one distinguish between good and evil. He has given this to all rational beings: some (distinctions are made) by the faculty of the reason and some by the words of the prophets, by that which He said: *And guide him to the parting of the mountain ways?* (Q. 90:10) He desired to show the way of good and evil to (the Messenger). And by that which He said: *(The Thamud) preferred blindness to the guidance,* (Q. 41:17) He meant that whoever is deprived of this guidance, either by reason of envy or pride, or because of worldly affairs, does not heed the prophets or the religious scholars. If (that were) not so, no rational person would be incapable of this.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the special guidance that appears little by little between religious conduct and striving, and opens the way to the underlying purpose. This is the fruit of striving. As He said: *As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths.* (Q. 79:69) He said that when one strives, We Ourself shall guide him to the way. He did not say: "We Ourself shall guide (him) to Us." And that which He said is also this: *And as for those who walk aright, He adds to their guidance...* (Q. 41:17)

THE THIRD DEGREE is the guidance reserved for the select. This light appears in the world of prophethood and sainthood. This guidance is to God Most High, not to the way of God. This is in a manner for which the intellect does not have the strength, for it comes of itself to (him). That which He said: *Say: Lo! The guidance of God is the Guidance!* (Q. 6:71) means that it is absolute guidance (*par excellence*). He called it "Revival" and said: *Is he who is dead and We have raised him unto life and set for him a light wherein he walks among men as him whose similitude is in utter darkness?* (Q. 6:122)

As for rectitude, it is that the impulse to travel the way with guidance appear in one. As He said: *And We gave Abraham his rectitude.* (Q. 21:51) A child who has reached puberty is not called rightly

guided[1471] if he knows how property is preserved and does not do so, even though he has received guidance.[1472]

As for finding guidance, it is that the motion of one's limbs move with ease from the aspect of that which is right so that one may quickly attain his goal. So, the fruit of guidance is in spiritual knowledge, the fruit of rectitude is motive and desire, and the fruit of finding guidance is in the power and tools of movement.

As for support, it is composed of the help of the angels from the unseen internally with the sharpness of perception, and externally with the power of strength and movement. As He said: *When I strengthened thee (Mary) with the Holy Spirit.* (Q. 5:110) Chastity is close to this. That is that an impediment appear inside one blocking the way to sin and the darkness of the way, but one does not fully understand where the impediment comes from. As He said: *And she certainly desired him, and he (Joseph) would have desired her if it had not been that he saw proof of his Lord.* (Q. 12:24)

These are the blessings of the world that are the provision for the Hereafter, and these have need of other causes, and these causes have need of other causes, until at the end (of the sequence) one reaches the Guide of the Perplexed and the Lord of Lords, Who is the Causer of Causes. A discussion of all the links in the chain of causes would be lengthy; let what we have said here suffice.

Disclosing the Cause of Shortcomings of People in Gratitude

Know that there are two reasons for the people's shortcomings in expressing gratitude:

ONE is the ignorance of the many of the blessings of God Most High, for no one knows the limits, amount, and number of the blessings of God Most High. As He has said: *And if ye count God's blessings, ye will not be able to number them.* (Q. 14:34) We have discussed some of the blessings of God Most High in *The Revival* so that it may be understood by analogy that it is not possible to know all the blessings. Further elaboration in this book is not possible.

THE OTHER REASON is that a person does not count as a blessing (for himself) any blessing which is common to all. He never gives thanks for the fine air which he breathes or helps the spirit in his heart and

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[1471] "rightly guided" (*rashīd*): here used in the sense of "mature."

[1472] "rectitude" (*rushd*): the Arabic root (*r-sh-d*) contains within it both the meanings such as "growing, growth, maturation," as well as being "rightly guided, righteous, orthodoxy, and following the right way." Al-Ghazzali is making use of both senses here.

which tempers the heat for the heart. If one breath is stopped, he will perish; yet he does not acknowledge this itself as a blessing. Like this, there are a hundred thousand blessings which he does not know, save when he goes to a place for a time where the air is foul and he suffocates, or because the air is hot in a hot bathhouse where he is confined. When he leaves (such a place), perhaps at that time, he will recognize the value of this blessing. Moreover, he does not give thanks for sight so long as he does not have a pain in his eyes or become blind. In this, he is like the bad slave who, so long as he is not beaten, does not know the value of blessings. If he is not beaten, he becomes cocky and negligent. Therefore, the solution of this is that one keep the blessings of God Most High fresh in one's soul, as we have explained in detail in *The Revival*, and that is appropriate for a perfect man.

As for the remedy for the imperfect man, it is that he go to the hospital and go to sultan's prison every day and go to the graveyard every day so as to see diverse afflictions and recognize his own well-being. Perhaps (then), he will occupy himself in giving thanks. When he goes to the graveyard, he knows that all of those dead are in the hope of a single day of life so that they could make up for their faults, but they shall not obtain it—while he has been given long days ahead of him, the number of which he does not know.

As for not being grateful for common blessings, such as the air, the sun, and the clear eye, and (as for) considering all blessings to be material things, and (only) that which belongs to one. One must realize that this is ignorance. For, the state of being a blessing does not depart from something because it is common. Moreover, if one reflects, he has many special blessings. There is no one who does not imagine that no one has an intellect such as he has, or that there is no character like his. It is because of this that he calls others fools and ill-natured, for he does not think that he himself is like that. Therefore, one must occupy oneself in giving thanks, not in criticizing people. Indeed, there is no one who does not have disgraceful acts and faults that he knows, but no one else does and that God Most High has kept veiled. Instead, if one reviews them in memory and thought, should people learn of them, one would be very embarrassed and put to shame. This is something private for every person. He must be grateful for that. He must not hope or speculate about that from which he is excluded so as not to remain deprived of gratitude. Rather he should reflect upon that which was given to him without his meriting it.

Someone complained of poverty to a saint. (The saint) said: "Wouldst thou prefer to lose thine eyes and to have ten thousand dirhams?" (The man) replied: "No." (The saint) asked: "Thine ears, thy hands, thy feet?" He answered: "No." (The saint) said: "Well, then, thou hast fifty thousand dirhams' worth of His goods! Why art thou complaining?" Instead, if thou sayest to most people: "Exchange thy

circumstances for those of so-and-so," they would not do it. They would not be satisfied with the circumstances of most (other) people. Consequently, that which has been given to one, has not been given to most people, and that is cause for giving thanks.

EXCURSUS: [ONE MUST GIVE THANKS FOR AFFLICTION TOO]

Know that one must also give thanks for affliction, because except for unbelief and sin, there is no affliction in which it is not possible for there to be some good which thou dost not know, but God Most High knows better what is good for thee. For every one of five kinds of affliction one must give thanks:

ONE is an affliction that is in the body or in worldly affairs, not in religious affairs. Someone said to Sahl Tustari (R): "A thief entered my house and stole all of my goods." (Sahl) said: "What wouldst thou have done if Satan had entered thy soul and had stolen thy faith?"

THE SECOND is that there is no illness or affliction other than which something cannot be worse. One should give thanks that it is not worse than it is. Whenever a person who deserves to be beaten with a thousand blows is not beaten with more than a hundred, there is cause for gratitude. One of the shaykhs was walking about. From above someone emptied a basin of ashes upon his head. He gave thanks. He was asked: "Why didst thou give thanks?" He replied: "A person who merits fire has been saved with ashes. That is cause for giving thanks and a total blessing."

THE THIRD is that there is no punishment that would not be greater if it were to be postponed to the Hereafter. One must be grateful that it has occurred in this world. That will be the cause of the reduction of much of one's punishment in the Hereafter. The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever has been punished in this world will not be punished in the Hereafter." Affliction is the atonement for sins. As one has atoned for a sin, why would he be punished (in the Hereafter)? Therefore, the physician who gives a bitter medicine or bleeds thee, even though that is unpleasant, is a cause for thanks, for by means of this unpleasantness thou art delivered from the misery of severe illness.

THE FOURTH is that affliction has been forewritten for thee on the Guarded Tablet and is part of the way (to the Hereafter). When it has been eliminated from the way and cast behind, it is cause for gratitude. Shaykh Abu Sa'id, may God have mercy upon him, fell off his donkey. He said: *"Praise be to God!"* They asked him: "Why didst thou say that?" He answered: "I have undergone the falling off of a donkey." That is, it was inevitable because it had been foreordained and ordered in the Divine Decree.

THE FIFTH is that an affliction in this world is a spiritual reward in the Hereafter from two aspects: one is that there is a great spiritual reward for it, as has been related in the Traditions. The other is that at the head of all sinning is affection for the world, so that the world becomes thy Paradise and going to the Divine Presence is thine imprisonment. The soul of whoever has been afflicted with the afflictions in the world is repelled by the world and the world becomes his prison, while death is his liberation. There is no affliction that is not a discipline from God Most High. If a child is intelligent, he will give thanks when his father disciplines him, for there is much benefit in that. In the Traditions, it is related: "God Most High attends to His Own friends with afflictions, just as ye attend to the sick with medicine and potions."

Someone said to the Messenger (S): "I have been robbed." He said: "There is no good in the person whose property is not taken or whose body does not become ill, for God Most High pours affliction upon the servants whom He loves." And he said: "There are many levels in heaven which the servant (of God) cannot attain by his own efforts. God Most High raises them to them by affliction."

One day the Messenger (S) was looking at the sky. He laughed and said: "I remain astonished at the decree of God Most High with regard to the believer. If He commands a blessing, he is content that it is for his good, and if He commands an affliction, he is content that it is for his good." That is, he suffers the latter and is grateful for the former because there is goodness in both. And the (Messenger) said: "The healthy will wish at the Resurrection that their flesh had been cut away with the talons of a leather currier out of pique for seeing the many (high) degrees of the afflicted."

One of the messengers said: "O Lord God, why dost Thou pour blessings upon the unbelievers and why dost Thou pour afflictions upon the believers?" He answered: "The afflictions and the blessings for My servants are all from Me. I want the believers to see Me at the time of death purified and without sin. I make the afflictions of this world (their) atonement. And in the unbelievers, there are goodnesses. I want to recompense (them) for those with worldly blessings so that when one sees Me (on the Day of Resurrection), he will have no claim left upon Me so that I may punish him fully. When this verse was revealed, that whoever does evil will see his requital: *He who does wrong will have the recompense thereof.* (Q. 4:123) (Abu Bakr) the Truly Righteous said: "O Messenger of God, how shall I be saved with this?" (The Messenger) answered: "Dost thou not become ill? Dost thou not sorrow? That is the requital of the believer."

Solomon (A) had a child that died. He sorrowed greatly. Two angels came to him in the form of two litigants. One said: "O messenger of God, I sowed seed in a field. This man trampled upon it." The other said: "He sowed the seed on a highway. As there was not room to the left

or right, I walked over it." Solomon said: "Didst thou not know that thou hadst sown the seed on a highway that would not be empty of travelers?" He answered: "O Solomon, didst thou not know that human beings are on the highway of death that thou hast donned the garments of mourning at the death of a son?" Then Solomon repented and sought forgiveness (of God).

'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz saw his own son sick and in danger of death. He said: "Son, thou goest before me and will be in my scales. I prefer that to my being in thy scales." He said: "O father, I desire that which thou desirest and preferrest."

Ibn 'Abbas (R) was informed that his daughter had died. He said: "*Verily we belong to God and to Him we shall return.*" (Q. 2:156) He covered her nakedness and made sufficient provision and earned spiritual reward. Then he rose and performed two bows of formal prayer and said: "Thus He has commanded: *Seek help in steadfastness and prayer.* (Q. 2:153) I have performed both."

And Hatim Asamm, may God have mercy upon him, said: "God Most High will make four persons witnesses for four groups on the Day of Resurrection: Solomon for the rich, Joseph for the slaves, Jesus for the poor, and Job for the afflicted.

Let this suffice for the study of gratitude in this book.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCERNING FEAR AND HOPE

Know that fear and hope are like two wings for the traveler of the way; whatever praiseworthy stations he reaches, he does so by their strength, for the obstacles which veil the Divine Presence are extremely high. So long as hope is not truthful and the eye does not fall upon the beauty of the Divine Presence, one cannot overcome those obstacles. The appetites on the road of hell are usually deceptive and crushing. Their nets are attractive and difficult. So long as alarm does not overcome the soul, one cannot avoid them. It is for this reason that the grace of fear and hope is great. Hope is as the bridle that draws on the servant of God, while fear is as the whip by which he is driven. Let us first discuss the effect of hope, and then the effect of fear.

THE VIRTUE OF HOPE

Know that the worship of God Most High in the hope of grace and magnanimity is better than worship in anxiety about punishment. For, love rises from hope, and no station is higher than love, while the dread of abhorrence is from fear. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: *"Let not one of you die while he does not have a good opinion of God Most High."*[1473] And he said that God Most High says: "I am there where (My) servant thinks. Say: Think whatever thought thou wishest about Me."

And the Messenger (S) said to someone at the time of death: "How dost thou find thyself?" (The dying man) said: "It is as though I fear because of my sins and I hope for His mercy." (The Messenger) said: "There is no one at such a moment in whose soul both are not joined that God Most High does not grant him security from that which he fears and grants (him) that for which he hopes."

God Most High sent a revelation to Jacob (A): "Dost thou know why I separated Joseph (A) from thee for so many years? Because thou saidst: '*I fear lest the wolf devour him.*' (Q. 12:13)[1474] Why didst thou fear the wolf and not have hope in Me? Thou didst think about the carelessness of his brothers, but thou didst not think about My guardianship." And 'Ali (R) saw someone hopeless because of his many sins. ('Ali) said: "Despair not, for His mercy is greater than thy sins."

The Messenger (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High shall say to (His) servant: 'Why didst thou not take action against the evil that thou sawest?' If God Most High calls his tongue to witness,

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[1473] Al-Ghazzali follows the Arabic with a Persian translation, omitted here.
[1474] See previous note (72).

it will say: 'I feared the people and had hope of Thy mercy.' God Most High will have mercy upon him." And one day, the Messenger (S) said: "If ye knew what I know, ye would weep much and laugh little. Ye would go to the desert and ye would beat your breasts and ye would wail." Then Gabriel came and said: "God Most High says: 'Why dost thou make My people despair of My mercy?'" So, he came out and by God's grace gave (the people) good hopes (for God's mercy).

God Most High sent a revelation to David (A): "Make Me beloved in the hearts of (My) servants." (David) asked: "How can I make them into friends?" (God) answered: "Remind them of My favors and blessings, for they have experienced nothing from Me save My goodness."

Yahya bin Aktham[1475] was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God Most High done with thee and how?" He answered: "He kept me in the station of interrogation and said: 'O shaykh, thou didst such and such,' until I was overwhelmed by a great dread. Then I said: 'O Lord God, I was not given such information about Thee.' He said: 'How was the information thou wert given?' I said: ''Abd al-Razzaq gave me such information (having heard it) from Zuhri, (who heard it) from Anis, (who heard it) from Thy Messenger Muhammad (S), (who heard it) from Gabriel, (who heard it) from Thee Who said: "I shall do with My servant what he thinks of Me and expects from Me." And I had the expectation that Thou wouldst have mercy upon me.' God Most High and Sanctified said: 'Zuhri spoke the truth and My Messenger spoke the truth and Gabriel spoke the truth. I have had mercy upon thee.' Then, I was dressed in a wondrous robe and after that, the servants of Paradise went before me. I experienced a happiness of which there is no likeness."

In the Traditions, it is related that one of the Children of Israel used to cause the people to despair of the mercy of God Most High and would make things very hard for them. On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High will say to him: "This day I shall make thee as despairing of My mercy as thou didst make My people despair of it."

And in the Traditions, it is related that a man is in hell for a thousand years and then he says: "O Compassionate! O Benefactor!" God Most High says to Gabriel: "Go and bring My servant." When he has been brought, (God) asks him: "How didst thou find thy place in hell?" He answers: "The worst of places." (God) says: "Carry him back to hell." As they are carrying him off, he looks back. From God Most High comes a call: "Why dost thou look back?" He answers: "O Lord

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[1475] Yahyā bin Aktham: an influential 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century personage at the Abbasid court. It is said that Ahmad bin Hanbal (see Note 579) recommended him to the caliph for office. Caliph Mutawakkil (rgd. AH232/847CE to AH247/861CE) appointed him as a judge. He was a teacher of Tirmidhi, the Traditionist. He was also lampooned by a satirical poet, Ibn al-Mu'adhdhal.

God, I was hoping that after Thou hadst brought me out of hell, Thou wouldst not send me back to hell." (God) declares: "Take him to Paradise!" He obtains salvation with that thought and hope.

The True Nature of Hope

Know that whoever is optimistic about the future, the optimism which he has is called "hope." It may also be called "desire," or it may be called "delusion," or "stupidity." The fools do not distinguish one of these from another and suppose that all of these are hope, and that this hope is praiseworthy, while that is not the case. Indeed, if a person seeks good seed and sows it in soft earth and cleans it of thorns and weeds and gives it water at the proper times and hopes that he will reap a harvest and that God Most High will withhold the lightning—this optimism is called "hope." But, if one sows rotten seed on hard ground and does not clean out the thorns and weeds and does not give it water, but hopes that rain will fall in a place where it usually does not rain—but it also not impossible—this is called "wish" and "desire."

In the same way, whoever plants the seed of correct faith on the plain of the breast and cleans the breast of the thorns of bad traits, and irrigates the tree of faith with care in devotion, and hopes that the grace of God Most High will repel disasters and that it will stay that way until the time of death so that he bear his faith soundly (to the Hereafter)—this is called "hope."[1476] Its sign is that in the future one commits no fault nor withholds (one's) caretaking, as far as possible. For, laying down the caretaking of tillage is from despair, not from hope. However, if the seed of faith is corrupted so that (its) certainty is not sound, or it is sound but the breast has not been cleansed of bad traits and devotion has not been watered, expecting the mercy of God Most High is stupidity, not hope.

As the Messenger (S) said: "*The fool is one who himself follows the impulses of his self and who desires of God, may He be honored and glorified, his longings.*" The fool is he who does whatever he wants and expects (God's) mercy. Indeed, God Most High said: *And a generation has succeeded them who inherited the Scriptures. They grasp the goods of this low life and say: 'It will be forgiven us.'* (Q. 7:169) He reproached those persons who, after the prophets had delivered knowledge to them but they had become immersed in the world, said: "We expect that God Most High will have mercy upon us."

Therefore, when anything has been exhausted, the necessaries of which are related to the discretion of a servant (of God), the fruit of expectation is hope. When the necessaries are destroyed, the fruit of expectation is stupidity and delusion. If they are not destroyed, but not in

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[1476] "*umīd*" is the Persian equivalent of the Arabic "*rajā'*."

good form, (the fruit of expectation) is wishing. The Messenger (S) said: *"There is no religion in desiring."* The task of religion is not managed with wishing. Therefore, whoever repents must hold the hope of acceptance. For, whoever does not repent, but is sorrowful and troubled because of his sinning and has the expectation that God Most High will accept his repentance, there is the hope that his misery will be the cause that will draw him to repentance. However, if he is not sorrowful and hopes for repentance, it is delusion. If he hopes for forgiveness without repentance, it is in the same way delusion, even if fools call this hope. God Most High says: *Lo! Those who believe, and those who emigrate and strive in the Way of God, these have hope of God's mercy.* (Q. 2:218) Those have accepted the faith and who have left their wishes in their own cities and habitations and have chosen expatriation and who have striven against the unbelievers—for them there is cause to hope of My mercy.[1477]

Yahya Mu'adh says: "There is no stupidity greater than that of the one who strews live coals and expects Paradise and seeks the mansion of the devout while he performs the works of the rebels (against God), or hopes for spiritual reward for unperformed works."

There was a person called Zayd al-Khayl.[1478] He said to the Messenger (S): "I have come to thee to ask what the sign is that God Most High wishes well for a person, and what the sign is that He does not wish well for him." (The Messenger) answered: "Every day when thou arise, how art thou?" (Zayd) said: "As though I love goodness and the doers of good. If some good appears, I perform it quickly and I recognize its spiritual reward with certainty. If it passes me by, I become miserable and remain unhappy in the desire for that." (The Messenger) said: "This is the sign that He has wished well for thee. If He had wanted the other, He would have engaged thee in it and then there would not have been any dread as to in which of the valleys of the world He would have destroyed thee."

The Remedy for Obtaining Hope

Know that no one has need of this medicine except for two ailing persons: one is he who has become despairing because of the multitude of his sins and does not repent, saying that it would not be accepted. The other is he who destroys himself with the multitude of his efforts and devotions and the many pains he imposes upon himself that he cannot

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[1477] Al-Ghazzali's paraphrase of the afore-cited verse.

[1478] Zayd al-Khayl: the chief of the deputation from Tayyi' (in northern Hijaz) who came to the Prophet during the Year of Deputations (AH10/631-2CE). The Prophet praised him and called him Zayd al-Khayr (Zayd the Good; Zayd al-Khayl means "Zayd of the Horses"). Sadly, he died on the way home of a fever apparently contracted at Madinah.

endure. These two sick persons are in need of this medicine. However, this medicine is not for the heedless. Hope overcomes for two reasons:

THE FIRST REASON is heeding a warning. One reflects upon the wonders of the world and upon the creation of plants, animals, and the different kinds of blessings—as we have discussed previously in the Chapter on Gratitude[1479]—until one perceives a mercy, favor, and kindness that cannot be exceeded. Indeed, if one examines oneself and how He has created everything one would need, even that which is absolutely necessary such as the head and heart; or that which is not absolutely necessary such as the hands and feet; or how He has created that which is adornment such as the redness of the lips, the arch of the eyebrows, or the blackness and straightness of the eyelashes. He has performed this mercy upon all animals. Even on the bee there are many delicacies of (His) handiwork in the symmetry of its form and the beauty of its coloring, and the guidance which He has given it so that it builds its own house and in which it stores honey, and in how it obeys its queen, and how their queen makes policy. Whoever meditates upon such marvels, external and internal, in himself and in all created things, knows that mercy is greater than that which would allow room for despair or that fear should overcome (one).

Instead, fear and hope should be equal; so, if hope overcomes, there is room for that. The signs of the kindness and mercy of God Most High in creation themselves have no limit, so that one of the saints says that there is no verse in the Quran offering more hope than the *Verse of Lending and Borrowing* (Q. 2:282),[1480] for God Most High revealed the longest verse in the Quran in order to preserve our property lest it would be lost by giving loans. This is one remedy for obtaining hope and it is of a very infinite greatness, but not everyone can attain that degree.

THE SECOND REASON is meditation upon the (Quranic) verses and Traditions of hope, which are also beyond numbering.[1481] As in the Quran, it is said that no one should despair of "My mercy": *Despair not of the mercy of God.* (Q. 39:53) The angels will ask for your forgiveness: *(The angels) ask forgiveness for those on earth.* (Q. 42:5) Hell is for the purpose of keeping the unbelievers in it; but ye are tormented and

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[1479] That is, the previous chapter.

[1480] This verse (Q. 2:282) is the longest in the Holy Quran and deals with lending, borrowing, and other business transactions, plus the strict requirements for the witnessing and recording of such transactions.

[1481] In the Quran, the word *raḥmah* (mercy) occurs, in one calculation, 114 times; the words *raḥmān* and *raḥīm*, both from the root meaning "mercy" and names of God meaning "the Merciful, the Compassionate" occur 57 and 95 times respectively. This does not include verbal and other permutations of the root.

frightened by it: *With this God does appall His servants.* (Q. 39:16) And the Messenger (S) was not content with begging forgiveness for his people day and night until this verse was revealed: *Truly thy Lord is rich in pardon for mankind despite their wrongdoing.* (Q. 13:6) When the verse was revealed: *And verily the Lord will give unto thee so that thou wilt be content,* (Q. 93:5) He said that Muhammad would not be satisfied so long as one of his people was in hell. There are many such verses.

As for the Traditions, the Messenger says: "My people are immune: their punishment will be in the world: turmoil and earthquakes. When the Day of Resurrection comes, an unbeliever will be handed over to each one and (the Muslim) will be told: 'This one is thy sacrifice in hell.'" And he said: "Fever is a heat-prostration from hell; that is the portion of the believer from hell."

Anas says: "The Messenger (S) said: 'O Lord God, make the accounting of my people with me lest anyone see their bad deeds.' (God) said: 'They are thy peoples and My servants. I am more merciful with them. I do not desire that anyone see their bad deeds; neither thou, nor another.'"

And the Messenger (S) said: "My life is good for you and my death is good for you. If I am alive, I teach you the Religious Law; if I am dead, your deeds will be displayed before me. I shall praise and give thanks for those which are good and I shall ask forgiveness for those which are bad."

One day the Messenger (S) said: "O Generous in Pardoning!" Gabriel (A) said: "Dost thou know what the meaning of that is? It is that He pardon the unseemly and exchange it for goodness."

He (S) said: "When a servant of God sins and asks forgiveness, God Most High says: 'O angels, look! My servant has sinned and he knows that he has a Master Who will not take him for the sin but will forgive him. I take you to bear witness that I have forgiven him.'"

And he (S) said: "God Most High says: 'If one of My servants sins to the extend of the heavens and the earth, I shall forgive him when he asks for forgiveness and puts his hope in Me.' And He said: 'If a servant has sins to the fill the earth, I have mercy for him to fill the earth.'"

And he (S) said: "An angel does not record the sin against a servant of God until six hours have passed. If he repents and asks forgiveness, (the angel) records nothing. If he does not repent but he asks forgiveness and performs devotions, the angel on his right hand says to the other (angel): 'Discard this sin from his record as I shall discard, too,

a good deed in exchange for that. Every good deed (counts) for ten. Nine will remain for him.'"[1482]

And he (S) said: "When a servant of God commits a sin, it is recorded against him." A desert Arab asked: "If he repents?" (The Messenger) answered: "It is erased." (The desert Arab) asked: "If he returns to that?" (The Messenger) said: "It is recorded." (The Arab) asked: "And if he repents?" (The Messenger) said: "It is erased." (The Arab) asked: "For how long?" (The Messenger) replied: "As long as he seeks forgiveness. God Most High does not tire of forgiving so long as (His) servant does not tire of asking forgiveness. When one intends to do a good deed, the angel records a good deed before it is performed. If he performs it, (the angel) records 'ten,' then he increases it up to seven hundred. When one intends to commit a sin, (the angel) does not record anything. If he commits it, (the angel) records 'one,' and there is the hope of the pardon of God Most High."

A man said to the Messenger (S): "I fast the month of Ramadan and perform the daily five obligatory formal prayers, but I do not exceed that. I am not obligated to pay the poor rate or to go on Pilgrimage because I have no property. Shall I be with thee on the Day of Resurrection?" The Messenger (S) smiled[1483] and said: "Thou wilt be with me if thou preservest thy soul from two things: from fostering enmity and envy; if thou restrainest thy tongue from two things: slander and lies; and if thou restrainest thine eyes from two things: looking at those of the prohibited degrees and looking at the servants of God Most High with contempt. Thou wilt enter Paradise together with me and I shall hold thee dearer than this, the palm of my own hand."

A desert Arab asked the Messenger (S): "O Messenger of God, who will take the account of the people in the Hereafter?"[1484] (The Messenger) answered: "God Most High." (The man) said: "He Himself?" (The Messenger) said: "Yes, He Himself." The desert Arab laughed. The Messenger (S) said: "Dost thou laugh, O man of the desert!" (The other) replied: "Yes, for when the Generous obtains, He pardons; when He reckons, He is lenient." The Messenger said: "Thou speakest correctly, for there is no one more generous than God Most High." Then he added: "This desert Arab is a jurisprudent!" Then, the Messenger said: "God Most High has made the Ka'bah noble and great. If someone were to

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[1482] This arithmetic is explained in the following Tradition.

[1483] "(he) smiled" (*khandid*), following the AA text. HK has *gumārad* which has the common meaning of "appoint, entrust," etc., which does not seem appropriate here. A rarer meaning of the verb *gumūrīdan*, recorded by Steingass, is "to gnash the teeth in indignation," which also seems inappropriate in this context. Other dictionaries consulted only treat it as a variant of *gumāshtan* with the meaning of "appoint, entrust," etc. The Arabic of *The Revival* uses the verb for "he smiled" (*tabassama*).

[1484] "in the Hereafter" (*fardā*): literally, "tomorrow."

destroy the Ka'bah and pull it down stone by stone and burn it, his crime would not be of the degree of that were he to make light of one of the friends of God Most High." The desert Arab asked: "Who are the friends of God?" He answered: "All believers are His friends. Hast thou not heard the verse: *God is the Friend of those who believe; He brings them out from darkness into light?*" (Q. 2:257)

And he said: "God Most High says: 'I created mankind so that they would benefit from Me, not so that I would benefit from them.'" And he said: "Before He created mankind, God Most High prescribed for Himself: 'My mercy overcometh My anger.'" And he said: "Whoever has said *There is no god but God* in sincerity shall go heaven. Whoever's last words are those shall not see hellfire. Whoever goes to the next world without ascribing partnership to God shall not enter the fire." And he (S) said: "If ye had not sinned, God Most High would have created another people so that they might sin in order (for Him) to forgive them. For, He is Forgiving and Compassionate." And he said: "God Most High is more merciful to His servant than a mother is kind to her child."

And he (S) said: "God Most High will show so much mercy on the Day of Resurrection such as the soul of any of His servants has never experienced; to such an extent that Iblis will raise his head in the hope of mercy." And he (S) said: "God Most High has one hundred mercies. He has put aside ninety-nine until the Day of Resurrection and not revealed more than one mercy in this world. All souls are merciful by that one mercy, even the mercy of the mother for her child and the mercy of the animal for its young. All are from that one mercy! On the Day of Resurrection, that one mercy will join the ninety-nine and be spread over mankind, each mercy as great as the storeys of the heavens and the earth. No one will be destroyed on that Day except those who are destroyed in eternity without beginning." And he (S) said: "I have reserved my intercession for the committers of mortal sins among my people. Do not suppose that it is for the devout and the pious. Rather, it is for the polluted and the confused."

Sa'd bin Bilal[1485] said: "Two men are brought out of hell on the Day of Resurrection. God Most High says: 'That which ye have suffered ye suffered for your evil deeds, for I do not oppress My Own servants.' And He commands that they be taken back to hell. One of the two goes off hurriedly in chains and irons while the other hangs back. (God) commands that both be brought back. He asks him who had hurried: 'Why didst thou do thus?' (The man) replies: "I was afraid. Because of the punishment I have experienced for (my) disobedience, I did not have the audacity to pause when the command came." And the other says: "I

[1485] Sa'd bin Bilāl: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

had a happy thought and I hoped that since Thou hadst brought me out of hell, Thou wouldst not send me back.' For these reasons, He sent both of them to Paradise."

And the Messenger (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, a Crier will cry out: 'O people of Muhammad, I have done what is Mine with regard to your affair, but your claims over one another remain (to be settled). Do this to one another and enter Paradise.'" And he (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, one of my people will be brought up before all mankind and ninety-nine ledgers. As far as the eye can see, he will see only sins. God, may He honored and glorified, asks: 'Dost thou deny any of all these (sins) and have the angels been unjust in recording them?' He answers: 'No, O Lord.' (God) asks: 'Hast thou any excuse?' He answers: 'No, O Lord,' and he sets his heart on hell. God says: 'I have a good deed of thine and I oppress thee not.' Then a piece of paper is brought forward upon which is written: *I testify that there is no god but God and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.* Then the servant of God asks: 'How can this piece of paper suffice for all those ledgers?' (God) says: 'They are not unfair to thee. They place all of those ledgers in one pan of the scales and that piece of paper in the other pan. And that piece of paper, which is heavier than all (in the other pan), causes all (of thy sins) to be lifted away, for nothing overcomes the Unity of God Most High.'"

And he (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High commands the angels to bring out of hell anyone in whose soul there is mustard seed's (weight) of goodness. They bring many out. Then they say: "No one of this class of people remains." (God) says: 'Bring out anyone in whose soul there is half a mustard seed's (weight) of goodness.' They bring out many more. The Fire says: 'None of these people are left.' Then He says: 'Bring out everyone in whose heart there is an atom of goodness.' Throngs of people are brought out and they say that no one with an atom of goodness in him remains. The intercession of the angels and prophets and the believers has all been completed and has been answered. Nothing is left for the mercy of the Most Merciful of the Merciful. He takes a handful out of hell and brings out some believers who had never done any good, even an atom's worth. All had become as black as charcoal. He throws them into one of the streams of heaven, that which is called the River of Life. They come out of that pure and bright, as greens that come from the midst of flowing waters, shining like pearls with small stones[1486] about the neck so that the inhabitants of heaven may recognize them. They say: 'These are all those who have done no good deeds liberated by God Most High.' Then He will say: 'Enter Paradise; all that ye see is yours.' They will say: 'O Lord God, Thou hast given us

[1486] "small stones" (*muhrah-hā*): or "beads" or "small shells."

what Thou hast not given any of the inhabitants of heaven.' He will say: 'Ye are greater to Me than that.' They will say: 'O Lord God, what is greater than this?' He will say: 'My satisfaction, for I am pleased with you, for I never become displeased.'" This Tradition is found in the *Sahih* of Bukhari and the *Sahih* of Muslim.[1487]

'Amr bin Hazm[1488] says that the Messenger was absent for three days, coming out (of his house) for nothing except the obligatory formal prayers. When it was the fourth day, he came out and said: "God Most High given me promise, saying: 'I shall forgive 70,000 of thy people without reckoning and place them in heaven.' During these three days, I begged for more. I found God Most High magnanimous and generous; for each one of those 70,000, He gave me 70,000 more.[1489] I said: 'O God! How many shall my people be?' He said: 'I shall complete this number from all of the wandering Arabs.'"

It is related that a child was captured in one of the expeditions in defense of the faith and was placed for auction on a very hot day. The eye of a woman in a tent fell upon that child and she ran out and the people in that tent ran out after her. She snatched the child up and clasped it to her breast and gave it shade with her own body so that heat would not affect it. She cried: "This is my son." When the people saw this, they wept and left off their work because of her great compassion. Then, the Messenger (S) arrived there and was told the story of what had happened. He rejoiced at their compassion and their weeping, and he said: "Are ye astonished by the compassion and mercy of this woman for the boy?" They said: 'Yes, O Messenger of God." He said: "God Most High is more merciful upon all than this woman is for her own son." Then, the Muslims dispersed from that place with a joy the like of which there had never been.

Ibrahim Adham, may God have mercy upon him, said: "One night I was circumambulating (the Ka'bah) by myself and it was raining. I said: 'O Lord God, preserve me from sin so that I have no fault.' I heard a voice from the direction of the Ka'bah. It said: 'Thou desirest sinlessness and all My servants desire that very sinlessness. If I keep all from sinning, then to whom shall I make known My grace and mercy?'"

Know that there are many such Traditions, and let them be the cure of the person whose fear overwhelms him. The person who is

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[1487] "the *Sahīh* of Bukhari and the *Sahīh* of Muslim": Two of the six collections of Traditions accepted by Sunni Muslims as reliable. Among these six, those of Bukhari and Abu Muslim are considered the most comprehensive and authentic.

[1488] 'Amr bin Hazm: a Companion of the Prophet. After the Banu Harith of Yemen accepted Islam, he was sent by the Prophet to Yemen to instruct them in Islam and collect alms.

[1489] That is, God shall forgive 4,900,000,000 men and women of the People of the Prophet without reckoning, *inshāllāh*.

dominated by heedlessness must understand that in all of these Traditions it is apparent that some believers will go to hell. The hindmost person will be the one who comes out of hell after seven thousand years. Since it is possible with respect to any person that he be that one, one must take up the way of resoluteness and circumspection. As much as one can, one must strive not to be that person. If one passes up all the pleasures of the world in that fear so that one not have to be one night in hell, it would be fitting, so what could one say about seven thousand years?[1490]

In short, fear and hope should be in balance, as 'Umar (R) said: "If it is announced that tomorrow no one will enter Paradise save one person, I shall think that I may be that one person. And if it is said that no one will enter hell save one person, I shall think that I will be that person."

Disclosing the Virtue of Fear and Its True Nature and Types

Know that fear is one of the great stations, and its virtue is appropriate to its causes and its results.

As for its causes, they are knowledge and spiritual insight, as will be explained after this. About this, God Most High said: *Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear God.* (Q. 35:28) And the Messenger (S) said: *"The head of wisdom is the fear of God."*[1491]

As for its results, they are chastity, Godliness, and piety. All of these are seeds of (spiritual) happiness, for one cannot travel the way to the Hereafter without surrendering the carnal appetites and (without possessing) patience. Nothing burns away appetite like fear. It is for this that God Most High has combined for the (God-)fearing guidance, mercy, knowledge, and pleasure and sent three verses in the Quran. The first is: *A guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord.* (Q. 7:154)[1492] Another is: *Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear God.* (Q. 35:28) And He said: *God is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him; this is for him who fears God.* (Q. 98:8) Piety, which God Most High has joined to Himself, is a result of fear. He said: *...but piety from you reaches Him.* (Q. 22:37)

[1490] There was (and is) a widespread belief that the world will end in 7,000 years, though the Day of Resurrection is known only to God.

[1491] In Arabic: *Ra's al-hikmat makhāfat-Allāh.*

[1492] This verse (Q. 7:154) refers to the tablets of the Law given to Moses. The complete verse is: *then, when the anger of Moses abated, he took up the tablet, and in their inscription there was guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord.*

And the Messenger (S) said: "That day on which mankind will be gathered on the plain[1493] of the Resurrection, a Crier shall address them in a voice heard far and near, saying: 'O people, I have heard all your words from the day on which I created (you), so today listen to My words and pay attention, for I shall place your affair before you. O people, ye have set down a lineage and I have set down a lineage. Ye have exalted your lineage and have dismissed My lineage. I have said: *Lo! The noblest of you in the sight of God is the most god-fearing;* (Q. 49:13)—the greatest among you is the most pious. Ye say: 'Great is that person who is so-and-so the son of so-and-so.' Today, I exalt My lineage and dismiss your lineage. *Where are the god-fearing?*—Where are the devout?' Then, a banner will be raised and brought forward, and the devout will follow after it until all have entered Paradise without accounting." It is for this reason that He doubled the spiritual reward of the fearing when He said: *But for him who fears the standing before his Lord there are two gardens.* (Q. 55:46)

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High says: 'By My power, I do not impose two fears and two securities upon a single servant. If he fears me in the world, I shall make him secure in the Hereafter; but if he is secure (in the world), I shall keep him in fear in the Hereafter.'" And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever fears God Most High, all things fear him. Whoever fears God Most High not is frightened by everything." And he said: "The one with the most perfect intelligence amongst you is the one who fears God Most High the most." And he said: "There is no believer who sheds a single tear drop because of fearing God Most High—even if it is in the amount of a fly's wing that touches his cheek—whose face is not forbidden to the Fire." And he said: "When the hair of a servant of God stands up because of his fearing God Most High, and he thinks upon that, his sins fall away as leaves from a tree." And he said: "Everyone who weeps because of fear of God Most High will not go into the Fire, so long as milk which comes out of the breast will not flow back (into the breast)."

'Ayishah (R) says: "I asked the Messenger (S) whether any of his people would enter heaven without accounting. He answered: 'Yes, he who trembles when remembering his sins.'" And said the Messenger (S): "No drop is more beloved by God Most High than the tear drop that is shed out of the fear of God and the drop of blood which is shed in the way of God Most High." And he said: "There will be seven persons in the shade of the Throne of God Most High on the Day of Resurrection: one among these seven is the person who weeps when remembering God

[1493] "plain" (*saʿīd*): literally, "the surface of the earth."

Most High in private." Hanzalah[1494] says: "I was with the Messenger (S) and he was counseling us so that souls had become attenuated and tears were flowing. Then, I returned home and my family began to talk and I became immersed in worldly talk. Then, I recalled the words of the Messenger (S) and I came out because of my weeping and I was shouting: 'Ah! Hanzalah has become a hypocrite!' Abu Bakr (R) appeared and said: 'Thou hast not become a hypocrite.' I went to the Messenger (S) and said: 'Hanzalah has become a hypocrite.' He said: '*Of course Hanzalah has not become a hypocrite!*' Then, I recounted my story. He said: 'O Hanzalah, if thou hadst continued as thou wert when thou wert with me, angels would take thy hand on the roads and in houses; but, O Hanzalah, hour by hour.'" [1495]

NON-PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: Shibli, may God have mercy upon him, says: "There never was a day in which fear (of God) overwhelmed me that one of the gates of wisdom was not opened to me." Yahya bin Mu'adh says: "The sin of a believer is between the fear of punishment and the hope of mercy like a fox between two lions." He also said: "If the destitute person would fear hell as he fears poverty, he would enter heaven." He was asked: "Who will be more fortunate tomorrow?" He answered: "He who is more frightened today." Someone asked Hasan Basri: "What dost thou say in the public assembly that frightens us so much that our hearts are torn apart?" He said: "It is better that ye tell the people: 'Ye are frightened today so that ye will attain security tomorrow,' than that ye tell the people: 'Ye have security today and ye will attain fear tomorrow.'" Abu Sulayman Darani says: "No soul is free from fear that is not in ruins."

'Ayishah said: "I asked the Messenger (S): 'What is that which is said in the Quran they do and they fear: *They give what they give with hearts afraid*? (Q. 23:60) Is this theft or adultery?' He said: 'No, they perform obligatory formal prayer, they keep the fast, and they give in charity and they fear that it will not be accepted (by God).'" Muhammad bin Munkadir, when weeping, would rub his tears (on his face) and say: "I have heard that every place the tears reach will never burn." (Abu Bakr) the Truly Righteous says: "Weep and if ye cannot, make yourselves." Ka'b Ahbar says: "By God, let me weep so that the water flows on my face. I prefer that to giving a few heaps of gold to the poor."

[1494] Hanzalah: Hanzalah bin Abū ʿĀmir, a Companion of the Prophet. At the battle of Uhud (AH3/625CE), when Abu Sufyan had been bested by Hanzalah, he was attacked by Shaddad al-Aswad and killed. It was about him that the Prophet said: "Your Companion, Hanzalah, is being washed by the angels."

[1495] "hour by hour" (*saʿatī wa saʿatī*): Literally, "an hour and an hour." That is, one must be in that state hour after hour.

'Abdullah bin 'Umar says: "I prefer one tear drop shed out of fear of God Most High over giving a thousand dinars in charity."

The True Nature of Fear

Know that fear, too, is one of the states of the soul and it is the fire of a pain that appears in the soul. It has causes and results.

As for its causes, they are knowledge and spiritual insight, because one understands the danger of the affair of the Hereafter and one understands that the causes of his destruction are prepared and overpowering. This fire of pain necessarily appears in the midst of his soul and arises from two spiritual insights:

ONE is that one sees his own defects truly: his own sins, the blights upon his acts of devotion, the malignancies of his character. An, with these faults, he sees the blessings of God Most High upon himself. He is like the person who has received robes of honor and favors from a king, and has then betrayed (the king) in his family quarters and treasury. Then, he suddenly realizes that the king has seen him in his treacheries and he knows that the king is jealous, avenging, and fearless. (The man) knows no one close to the king to intercede on his behalf. He has neither means nor relationship. The fire of pain will necessarily appear in his soul when he sees the imperilment of his own affair.

AS FOR THE SECOND INSIGHT, it does not spring from his nature; rather, it springs from fearlessness and its power, which he fears. Just as when a person falls into the claws of a lion and is afraid, not because of his own sin, but because he knows about the nature of the lion which is about to kill (him) and that it has no fear of him and his weakness. This fear is more complete and superior. And whoever knows the attributes of God Most High and has come to recognize His majesty, greatness, and fearlessness—for if He destroys the entire world and keeps it in hell eternally, not one atom of His kingdom would be diminished, and His essence is above the reality of that which is called kindness and compassion—there is room for him to be afraid. The prophets had this fear too, even though they knew they were innocent of sins. Whoever becomes more familiar with God Most High becomes more frightened. The Messenger (S) said about this: "I am the most knowing of God among you and the most fearing." For this reason, He said: *Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear God.* (Q. 35:28) The more ignorant a person is, the more secure he feels. A revelation came to David (A): "O David, fear Me as thou wouldst fear an enraged lion." This is the cause of fear.

AS FOR THE RESULTS OF FEAR, they are in the soul, in the body, and in the limbs. As for those in the soul, they make the carnal appetites loathsome to one and there is no care for them. For, if a person has a craving for a woman or some food, when he falls into the claws of a lion or into the prison of a harsh ruler, no care about that appetite is left to him. Rather, the state of his soul in fear is total humility, submissiveness, and abjectness. It is all observation, calculation, and looking at consequences. No pride remains, neither envy, appetite for the world, nor heedlessness. As for its results in the body, they are emaciation and pallor. And its results in the (bodily) limbs are keeping them pure from sins and making them obedient in devotion (to God).

The degrees of fear are various: if it keeps one from the carnal appetites, it is called chastity. If it keeps one from the unlawful, it is called scrupulousness. If it keeps one from the doubtful or from the lawful from fear of the unlawful, it is called piety. If it keeps one from everything except the provisions for the road to the Hereafter, it is called truth[1496] and the person is called truly righteous.[1497] Chastity and scrupulousness are beneath piety and all of these are beneath veracity. In reality, this is fear. As for him who weeps and shaves (his head) and says: *There is no power nor strength except with God*, and then goes back to his heedlessness, this is called the weakheartedness of women. This is not fear, for whoever fears something flees from it. A person who has something in his sleeve looks to see whether it is a snake. It is not possible for him to content himself with a *There is no power* (*nor strength except with God*); rather, he throws it down. Dhul-Nun was asked: "Who is the fearing servant of God?" He replied: "He who feigns sickness so that he may avoid all carnal appetites because of the fear of death."

THE DEGREES OF FEAR

Know that in fear, too, there are three degrees: weak, strong, and moderate. The most praiseworthy of them is moderate. Weak is that which does not prompt a person to act, such as the mildness of women. Strong is that from which there is the fear of hopelessness, the fear of illness, losing consciousness, and death. Both of these are blameworthy, for fear in itself is not a perfection as (are) the Divine Unity, spiritual

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[1496] "truth" (*ṣidq*): *ṣidq* and *ṣiddīq* (see following Note) are derived from the Arabic root *ṣ-d-q*. The root meaning is "speaking the truth, being sincere, telling the truth about something, coming true," etc. It carries the sense of veracity, candor, honesty, and scrupulous truth telling.

[1497] "truly righteous" (*ṣiddīq*): or "a faithful witness of the truth." A very high rank in Islam.

insight, and love. It is for this that it is not included among the attributes of God Most High. Moreover, there is no fear without ignorance and feebleness, for so long as the outcome is unknown and there is no inability to avoid peril, there is no fear. But, fear is perfect when it is joined to the state of the heedless. It is like the whip that instructs children and moves animals on their way. When it is so weak that there is not sufficient pain, it is not instructive nor does it direct on the way. Or, when it is too strong, children and animals are injured or (bones are) broken. Neither of these is beneficial; rather, it should be (applied) in moderation in order to restrain one from sin and make one eager for devotion.

The fear of whoever is more learned is more moderate, for when it becomes excessive, he reflects again upon the causes of hope. When it becomes weak, he reflects again upon the dangers of the affair. Whoever does not fear and calls himself learned has learned that which is useless, not knowledge, like the fortune-teller in the market who calls himself a wise man, but has no hint of wisdom. The beginning of all spiritual insights is that one come to know oneself and God Most High: oneself with (one's) defects and shortcomings, and God Most High with His greatness, majesty, and His not being afraid to destroy the world. Nothing is born from these two insights other than fear. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: "*The beginning of knowledge is the insight into the Omnipotent and the end of knowledge is entrusting the affair to Him.*" He said: The beginning of knowledge is that thou know God by His omnipotence and vanquishing. And, the end is that, servant-like, thou entrust thine affair to Him and that thou know that thou art nothing and that thou hast nothing. How would it be possible that a person know this and not fear?

Disclosing the Kinds of Fear

Know that fear arises from the knowledge of danger. Each person has a different danger before him. There is the person to whom hell comes before him, and his fear is of that. There is the person to whom something comes that is of the path to hell, so that he fears that he may die before he repents; or he fears that he may fall into sin again; or that hardness and heedlessness may appear in his soul; or that his habits may carry him to the threshold of sin; or his vanity may overcome him because of his blessings; or that he may be caught on the Day of Resurrection because of his oppressions of the people; or that his scandals may become public and he be disgraced; or he fears that something may occur in his thought that God Most High sees and knows and of which He does not approve.

The benefit of each of these is that one work upon that which he fears. When he fears that (bad) habits will carry him to sin, he flees from the path of (those) habits. When he fears the knowledge of God Most High, he keeps his soul pure. In the same way, the most overwhelming to his fearful soul is the fear of the conclusion,[1498] lest he not take his faith (with him) intact (to the Hereafter). More perfect than this is the fear of the past as to what has been decided with respect to his tribulations or happiness, for the conclusion is the corollary of the past. The reality is that which the Messenger (S) said from the pulpit: "God Most High has written a book and the names of the inhabitants of Paradise are in it." He raised his right hand and he said: "He has written another book, and the names of the inhabitants of hell together with their lineage and particulars are in it." He raised his left hand and he said: "There will be no increase nor any reduction in them. And there are of the people of happiness: those who perform the deeds of the wretched, so that all will say that he is of (one of the wretched condemned to hell). Then God Most High will turn him away from that road before his death—even if it be but an hour away—and bring him to the road to happiness. Happy is he who is happy in the eternal decree and wretched is he who is wretched in the eternal decree, but the (important) matter is the ending."[1499]

Therefore, for this reason, the fear of the perspicacious is of this and that is more perfect, just as fear of God Most High by reason of the attributes of His Majesty is more perfect than the fear by reason of one's own sins; for that fear will never depart. When one fears sin, it may be lead to the delusion: "Since I have stopped sinning, what have I to fear?"

In short, whoever recognizes that the Messenger (S) will be at the highest of the degrees and Abu Jahl[1500] in the lowest degree of hell, though neither possessed any means or crime prior to creation. When He created (them), He made easy the way of spiritual insight and devotion to the Messenger, causelessly on his part. It was made necessary that his desire be used for that. He would not have been able to conceal from himself that which was shown and revealed to him. He would have been unable to distance himself from that which he knew to be a fatal poison. But Abu Jahl, whose vision was shut off, was unable to perceive. Since he did not see, he was unable to hold himself back from appetites without recognizing their detriment. So both were compelled. However, as He

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[1498] "conclusion" (*khātimat*): that is, death.

[1499] In this Tradition, the Prophet is saying that our fate is preordained and that is unchangeable. If it appears that a person who is destined for heaven is on the road to hell, God will intervene and set him on the right path, even if it is an hour before his death. How things end is what is important.

[1500] Abu Jahl: Abū Jahl (the Father of Ignorance), an implacable opponent of the Prophet whose real name was ʿAmr bin Hishām. Mentioned by this epithet in Q. 111:1. Q. 22:8 is also thought to allude to him. He was a boastful and debauched man and was killed in the battle of Badr (AH2/624CE).

intended, He commanded one to wretchedness causelessly and drove him to hell. He commanded one to happiness and carried him to the highest of the high with the chain of force. Whoever issues such commands as He wishes has no fear, but fearing Him is inevitable. It is for this that He said to David (A): "Fear Me as thou wouldst fear a roaring lion," for a lion does not fear to destroy. If it stops, it is not because of compassion or anxiety that it releases thee, but because of thine unimportance to it. It is not possible for whoever has understood these attributes of God Most High to be free from fear. *And God is the Best Knower.*

Disclosing the Bad Ending

Know that most of the fearful have been afraid of the ending, because the human soul is (constantly) changing and the time of death is an awesome moment. It is not possible to know what it will settle upon at that time. One of the spiritually insightful of religion even says: "If I have known a person (to be) in the Unity (of God) for fifty years, since he has been absent from me many times behind walls, I cannot swear to his (adherence to the creed of Divine) Unity, because the condition of the soul is changeable. I do not know into what it may turn." Another says: "If they say: 'Dost thou prefer martyrdom at the door of (thy) house or death as a Muslim at the door of (thy) chamber?' I say: 'Death as a Muslim at the door of (my) chamber, because I do not know whether (my) Islam will remain as far as the door of the house or not.'" Abu Darda used to swear: "No one is secure from having his faith taken from him at the time of death."

Sahl Tustari says: "With every breath the truly righteous are fearful of a bad ending." At the time of death, Sufyan Thawri, may God have mercy upon him, lamented and wept. They said: "Do not weep, for the pardon of God Most High is greater than your sins." He said: "If I knew I would die in the Unity, I would not fear, even though I have sins in the amount of several mountains." One of the saints made a will and gave what things he had to a person, saying: "The sign of my dying in (the faith of) the Unity (of God) is such-and-such a thing. If thou seest that sign, buy sugar and almonds with that money and toss them upon the children of the city and say: 'This is the wedding of so-and-so who has escaped.' If thou dost not see that sign, say to the people of the city that they should not offer a formal prayer for me and not be deceived by me so that after death, anyway, I may not be a hypocrite."

Sahl Tustari says: "A disciple fears that he will fall into sin, while the knower fears that he will fall into unbelief." Abu Yazid says: "When I go to the mosque I see a belt[1501] about my waist and until the

[1501] "belt" (*zunnār*): A belt worn by Eastern Christians and Jews.

moment I enter the mosque, I fear that it will take me to a church. It is the same five times every day." Jesus (A) said to his disciples: "Ye fear sins and we who are prophets fear unbelief." One of the prophets was afflicted by much hunger, thirst, and trouble for many years. So he complained to God Most High and a revelation came: "I preserve thy soul from unbelief and thou art not delighted by that so that thou desirest the world?" He answered: "O Lord God, I repent and I have become delighted." He threw dust upon his head out of shame for his request.

One of the reasons for a bad ending is hypocrisy. It was for this that the Companions always were in fear of hypocrisy. Hasan Basri, may God have mercy upon him, said: "If I were sure that there is no hypocrisy in me, I would have no fear of anything on the face of the earth." And he said: "A difference between the inside and the outside and (between) the heart and the tongue is hypocrisy."

EXCURSUS: [THE CAUSES OF A BAD ENDING]

Know that the meaning of the bad ending of which all are afraid is that one's faith be taken away at the time of departure.[1502] There are many reasons for this and its knowledge is hidden, but it can be said in this book that it arises from two causes:

ONE is that a person believes in a vain heresy and passes his life holding that (belief) and does not imagine that (the belief) itself could be a mistake. When death is near, affairs are revealed. It may be that the error be disclosed to him and for that reason he may become doubtful about the (other) beliefs that he had as well, because his confidence in his own belief has left him and he departs from the world holding those doubts. This peril is for the heretic and for the person who travels the path of scholastic dispute, even though he be scrupulous and pious. However, the fools and the smug who are Muslims in appearance, as mentioned in the Quran and the Traditions, consider themselves secure from this. The Messenger (S) said about this: "*Let the religion of old women be yours; most of the inhabitants of heaven are guileless.* For this reason, the forefathers prohibited scholastic dispute, argument, and inquiry in the essential nature of things, for they knew that not everyone could endure that and one quickly falls into heresy.

THE SECOND REASON is that (one's) faith is essentially weak and the love for the world is victorious over the love for God Most High. At the time of death, when one sees that all his lusts are taken away from him and that he will be driven out of the world by force and be taken to a place he does not desire—perhaps because of the disliking of that which He does to him—he will change and the weak love (he formerly had for

[1502] "the time of departure": death.

God) will also be nullified, as a person who loves a child, but that love is weak. When that child takes something which (the parent) loves more than he loves the child, (the parent) takes the child as an enemy and that amount of love that he had is also lost. It is for this that the rank of martyrdom is so great, for at that moment the world has departed from before him. The love for God has triumphed and he has laid his body on death. In such a state, death's arrival is a great booty, because this state changes rapidly and the soul will not continue in that character. So, for whomever the love of God Most High is stronger than all else, that will necessarily keep him from giving all of himself to the world. He is more secure from this danger. And when the moment of death arrives and he knows that the moment of seeing the Friend has come, the coming of death will not be displeasing and the love for God Most High will become triumphant. The love of the world becomes void and disappears. This is the sign of a good ending.

Therefore, whoever desires to distance himself from this peril must distance himself from heresy and believe in that which is in the Quran and the Traditions. He must strive so that God Most High becomes dominant over him and the love for the world becomes weak, and vanishes. It weakens when one observes the limits of the Law so that the world becomes loathsome to him and he averts oneself from it. The love for God Most High becomes stronger by always remembering Him and by association with His friends, not with the lovers of the world. So, if (thy) love for the world be stronger, (thy) affair is in (greater) danger, as He said in the Quran: "If ye love your father, children, wife, property, ease, and all that ye have more than God Most High, then be prepared until the command of God Most High arrives": *Then wait until God brings His command to pass.* (Q. 9:24)[1503]

The Procedure for Acquiring the Fear (of God)

Know that the first station of the stations of religion is certainty and spiritual insight. Then, fear arises from spiritual insight, and from fear asceticism, patience, and repentance arise. Truth, sincerity, care in the remembrance (of God), and continuous meditation appear from fear, and from them familiarity and love arise. And this is the end of the stations. Satisfaction, commitment, and zeal; all of these follow upon love. As a consequence, the alchemy of (spiritual) happiness, after

[1503] The verse which Al-Ghazzali is paraphrasing runs thus: *Say: If your fathers, and your sons, and your brethren, and your wives, and your tribe, and the wealth ye have acquired, and the merchandise for which ye fear that there will be no sale, and the dwellings ye desire are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait until God brings His command to pass. God guides not wrongdoing folk.* (Q. 9:24)

certainty and spiritual knowledge, is fear. Whatever is after that cannot be managed without it. This may be obtained in three ways:

THE FIRST WAY is through knowledge and spiritual insight. For when one has come to know oneself and God Most High, one will necessarily fear God Most High. Whoever has fallen into the claws of a lion and who knows the (nature of the) lion will have no need for any treatment to become afraid. Rather, he becomes fear itself! Whoever recognizes God Most High in His majesty and power, (Who is) without any need for mankind, and who recognizes himself in his helplessness and distress, sees himself truly in the claws of a lion. Moreover, any one will necessarily be afraid who recognizes the decree of God Most High, that everything that will be until the Resurrection has been decreed—happiness for some without any means and hardship for others without any crime—instead, it is as He desires and that never changes. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: "Moses (A) argued with Adam (A) and Adam also argued with Moses. Moses said: 'God Most High brought thee to Paradise and did so many good things; why didst thou disobey His command so that thou threwest thyself and us into affliction?' (Adam) answered: 'Was that sin preordained for me in the beginning?' (Moses) answered: 'Yes.' (Adam) said: 'Would I have been able to disobey His command?' (Moses) said: 'No.' *So Adam overcame Moses.* Moses was cut off by Adam and did not reply."

Many are the gates of spiritual insight that arise from fear. Whoever is more insightful is more fearing, so that it is narrated: "Gabriel (A) and the Messenger (S) were both weeping. A revelation came to them: 'Why do ye weep when I have made you secure?' They said: 'O Lord god, we are not secure from Thy cunning.' He said: 'Remain in that manner.' It was from the perfection of their spiritual insight that they said: 'Let what He said to us—that we are safe—not be a test and that there be some mystery under that which we are unable to perceive.'" On the day (of the battle) of Badr, in the beginning, the Muslim army had been weakened and the Messenger (S) was afraid. He said: "O Lord God, if these Muslims are destroyed on the face of the earth, no one will remain to worship thee." (Abu Bakr) Siddiq said: "What oath dost thou swear by God Most High? He has promised thee aid and He will necessarily execute His promise." The station of Siddiq at that moment was confidence in (God's) promise and generosity, while the station of the Messenger (S) was fear of cunning. This was more perfect because he knew that he could not perceive the secrets of divine affairs, His arrangements in the management of (His) kingdom, and the intention of His decree.

THE SECOND WAY is that if one is unable (to achieve) spiritual insight, he should associate with those who fear (God), so that their fear

may spread to him and he may distance himself from the heedless. By these means, fear is obtained, although by imitation, as a child's fear of snakes (is) because he has seen his father flee from them. He too is afraid and runs away, even though he does not know the characteristics of snakes. This fear is weaker than the fear of one who knows, for if the child sees a few snake charmers who handle them, just as he fears by imitation, so he will feel safe by imitation and he touches them. One who knows the nature of snakes does not become secure about them. Therefore, one imitating the fear (of the knowers) must avoid associating with the complacent and heedless, especially that person who is outwardly learned.

THE THIRD WAY is that when one cannot find such people with whom to associate—and there are few remaining in this era—one should listen to (stories of) their states and character and read of them in books. For this reason, we shall recount some of the states of the prophets and saints with respect to fear so that whoever has a modicum of intellect may know that they were the most intelligent, most insightful, and most virtuous of mankind, yet they feared thus. Others should be even more fearful.

STORIES OF THE MESSENGERS AND ANGELS

It is related that when Iblis was cursed (by God), Gabriel and Michael wept continuously. God Most High sent a revelation to them: "Why do ye weep?"—and He is More Knowing—they said: "O Lord God, We are not secure from Thy devisings." He said: "That is as it should be. Be not complacent."

Muhammad bin al-Munkadir (R) says: "When He created hell, the angels wept; when He created man, they became silent, for they knew that He had created it for them." The Messenger (S) says: "Gabriel never came to me but that a trembling fell upon me out of fear of God Most High." Anas says: "The Messenger (S) asked Gabriel: 'Why do I never see Michael smiling?' (Gabriel) answered: 'Since the Fire was created, he has not smiled."

Mujahid says: "David (A) wept for forty days with his head pressed against the ground until plants grew from his tears. A call came: 'O David, why dost thou weep?' (David) cried out: 'A stick would burn from the fire of my self.' Then, God Most High accepted his repentance. (David) said: 'O Lord God, inscribe my sin upon the palm of my hand lest I forget it.' (God) complied. He would not extend his hand for any food or drink without seeing that and weeping. Sometimes he would be given a cup of water not full and he would fill that cup with his tears."

It is related that David (A) wept so much that he lost his strength. He said: "O Lord God, wilt Thou have mercy upon my weeping?" A revelation came: "Thou dost talk of weeping! Hast thou forgotten thy sin?" He answered: "O Lord God, how could I forget that when before my sin, when I recited the psalms, flowing water in the streams and the blowing wind in air would stop and the birds of the sky would gather over my head and the desert beasts would come to my place of prayer. Now there is nothing of that. O Lord God, what terror is this?" (God) said: "O David, that was the intimacy of devotion and this is the terror of sin. O David, Adam was my servant. I created him with My Own Gracious Hand and breathed My Own Spirit into him. I commanded the angels to prostrate themselves before him and I cloaked him with the honored robe of wonder. I placed the crown of dignity upon his head. He complained of his loneliness. I created Eve from his side and I brought them both to Paradise. I drove them out, despised and naked, from My Presence because of one sin. O David, listen! Listen to the truth: thou hadst Our devotion. We had thy devotion. I gave thee what didst desire. Thou didst commit a sin. We gave thee a reprieve. Now with all of this, if thou dost turn back to Us, We shall accept thee."

Yahya bin Kathir says that there is a story that when David (A) was intent upon lamenting for his sin, he would not eat anything for seven days, nor go to his women. He would come to the desert and command Solomon (A) to call out: "O people of God, whoever desires to hear the lamentation of David, come." Then people from the towns, birds from their nests, wild animals and predatory beasts from the wildernesses, reptiles from the mountains and the desert would head for that place. He would begin with the praise of God Most High and the people would cry out. Then he would describe the features of heaven and hell. Then he would mourn his sin so that many people would die of fear and anxiety. Then Solomon (A) would stand over him and say: "Enough, O father, for many people have perished!" They would announce that so-and-so and so-and-so has received the command[1504] so that their family would come and carry off the corpses. Each person would pick up his corpse so that one day of the forty thousand people who were at the assembly thirty thousand had perished. He had two servant girls whose duty it was to seize him at the time of fear and hold him lest his limbs not come apart (from each other).

And John the son of Zechariah (A) used to worship in Jerusalem. He was a child. When (other) children called him to play (with them), he would say: "He has not created me for play." When he was fifteen, he went to the desert and left mankind. One day, Zechariah (A) passed by him. He saw (his son) standing beside some water and was on the point

[1504] "has received the command": that is, "has died."

of death from thirst. (John) was saying: "By Thy power, I will not drink water so long as I do not know what my place is with Thee." He had wept so much that no flesh remained upon his face and his teeth had become visible and he had placed a piece of felt on his face so that the people would not see it. There are many stories similar to these about the prophets.

Stories of the Companions and the Forefathers

Know that when (Abu Bakr) Siddiq, with all of his greatness, would see a bird, he would say: "I wish that I were that bird." Abu Dharr Ghaffari would say: "I wish that I were a tree." 'Ayishah said: "I wish that there were neither name nor sign of me."

Sometimes 'Umar, when hearing a verse of the Quran, would fall down and become unconscious and people would visit him for several days. There would be something resembling two black lines on his face from weeping. He would say: "I wish that 'Umar had never been born of his mother." Once, he was passing by a house. Someone was reciting the Quran. (The reciter) had come to the verse: *Lo! The doom of thy Lord will surely come to pass; there is none that can ward it off.* (Q. 53:7-8) He descended from his animal and threw himself against a wall out of weakness. They took him home and he was ill for a month, and no one knew the cause of his illness.

When 'Ali bin al-Husayn (R) would perform the obligatory purification (for formal prayer), his face would become pale. They would ask: "What is this?" He would say: "Do ye not know before Whom I am about to stand?"

Musawwir bin Makhzamah[1505] could not endure listening to the Quran. One day, a stranger who did not know (Musawwir's) custom, recited these verses: *On the Day when We shall gather the righteous unto the Beneficent, a goodly company, and drive the guilty into hell, herding;* (Q. 19:85-86) and said: "We are of the guilty, not of the pious." (Musawwir) said to him: "Recite it again." (The stranger) did so. (Musawwir) cried out and gave up the ghost.

Hatim Asamm says: "Do not be deceived by a fine place, for there is no place better than Paradise. Dost thou know what happened to Adam in Paradise? Do not be deceived by a plethora of acts of worship. Dost thou know what happened to Iblis? Do not be deceived by a lot of knowledge, for Bal'am Ba'ura had reached the point in knowledge so that he knew the Great Name of God Most High. Concerning him, it was

[1505] Musawwir bin Makhzamah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

revealed: *And his likeness is the likeness of the dog.* (Q. 7:176)[1506] And do not deceive thyself with looking upon good men, for relatives of the Messenger (S) saw him frequently and associated with him, but did not become Muslims.

Sari Saqati, may God have mercy upon him, says: "I look into my nose every day and ask if my face has become black." 'Ata-yi Sulami was one of the fearers. He did not laugh for forty years, nor did he look at the sky. He looked at the sky once and fell down out of fear. Every night, he would pass his hand over himself several times to see whether he had been metamorphosed or not. When some calamity, trouble, or famine would reach the people, he would say: "All of this is because of my evil. If I were to die, the people would be delivered."

Ahmad Hanbal, may God have mercy upon him, says: "I offered supplications so that God Most High might open one of the doors of fear to me. He answered my supplications. I feared that I would lose my reason. I said: 'O Lord God, (let it be disclosed) according to one's ability to bear it.' Then my soul calmed down." One of the pious worshippers of God was seen weeping. He was asked: "Why dost thou weep?" He answered: "Out of fear of that Hour in which mankind will be summoned to present themselves at the Resurrection."

Someone asked Hasan Basri, may God have mercy upon him: "How art thou?" He replied: "What would be the condition of a person who is with some people on the sea, the ship is wrecked and each one remains on a board?" They said: "Difficult." He said: "That is how I am." He also said: "It is related in the Traditions that one is brought out of hell after a thousand years. I wish that I could be that person." He said this because he feared the evil ending of eternal (damnation) in hell.

Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz[1507] had a serving girl.[1508] One day, she woke up from sleep and said: "O Commander of the Believers, I dreamt something strange." He said: "Tell me." She said: "I saw hell burning. The bridge was stretched over it and the caliphs were brought out. First, I saw 'Abd al-Malik Marwan[1509] brought forth and told: 'Cross this bridge.' It was not long before he fell into hell. Then they brought forth his son Walid bin 'Abd al-Malik, and he fell in immediately. Then, his

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[1506] Commentators consider this to be a reference to Bal'am and associate it with the period of Moses. If the commentators are correct, this would identify Bal'am with the Biblical Balaam, whose complex story is found in Numbers 22-24. The story is discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* and in the separate *Moses.* extracted from it.

[1507] 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz: 'Umar II, the son of 'Abd al-'Aziz: the eighth Umayyad caliph. rgd. AH99/717 CE to AH101/72CE0. See Note 784.

[1508] "a serving girl" (*kanizak*): or, "concubine."

[1509] 'Abd al-Malik (bin) Marwan: 'Abd al-Malik, the son of Marwan. He was the fifth Umayyad caliph, rgd. AH64/685CE to AH86/705CE.

son Sulayman bin Abd al-Malik[1510] was brought forth and the same occurred." ('Umar) said: "Continue." She said: "Then, O Commander of the Believers, they brought thee forth." When she said that, 'Umar cried out, and fell down unconscious. The girl cried out: "By God, I saw that thou hadst crossed safely!" The girl was crying out and he was writhing (on the floor).

Hasan Basri did not laugh for years. He would always appear like a tormented prisoner whose head is about to be cut off. He would be asked: "With all of thy worship and striving, why art thou so overtaken by troubles?" He would answer: "I am not certain that God Most High may not have seen something in me to make Him my enemy and say: 'Do whatever thou wishest, for I shall not have mercy upon thee,' and all of my efforts will have been in vain."

There are many stories similar to these. Look, now, how they feared (God) and thou feelest secure! It is either because they had committed many sins and thou hast not, or because they had much spiritual insight, and thou hastit not. Thou, because of foolishness and heedlessness, feel safe in spite of thy many sins; and they, because of their clear perception and spiritual insight were anxious, in spite of their many acts of devotion.

Excursus: [Which Is Superior, Fear or Hope?][1511]

At the same time that a person says there are many Traditions about the virtues of fear and hope, which of these two is superior and which should win over the other? Know that fear and hope are like two medicines. One does not say a medicine is superior, but that it is more beneficial. For fear and hope, as we have said about attributes, are deficient. The perfection of a human being is that he be immersed in his love for God Most High, so that his remembrance takes hold of his totality and he does not think about the past itself or the ending itself. Instead, he looks at time, but he does not look at time either, rather he looks at the Lord of Time. When he pays attention to fear and hope, this becomes a veil; however, such a state is rare. So, whoever is approaching the time of death must be hopeful, for this increases love. And whoever is going from this world must be in the love for God Most High so that meeting Him will become his (spiritual) happiness, for there is pleasure meeting the Beloved.

[1510] Sulayman bin 'Abd al-Malik: the seventh Umayyad caliph, the son of 'Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, rgd. AH96/715CE to AH99/717CE. He succeeded his brother Walid (rgd. AH86/705CE to AH96/715CE) to the caliphate. HK incorrectly calls him "Sulayman bin (son of) Walid."

[1511] From the AA text.

But at other times, if a man is one of the heedless, fear must overwhelm him, because the triumph of hope would be a fatal poison for him. If he is pious and his states and conditions are free from vice, his fear and hope should be moderate and equal. When he is engaged in worship and devotions, hope should be stronger; for the purity of the heart in conversation with God is a kind of love. However, at the time of sinning, fear should be stronger. Indeed, during the time of doing lawful things, fear should predominate—if a man is worshipful. If not, he may fall into sin. Therefore, these are medicines the benefits of which change according to conditions and individuals. The answer to this (question) is not absolute.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCERNING POVERTY AND ASCETICISM

Know that the circuit of the way of religion is based upon four principles, which we have discussed in the Prolegomena:[1512] thy self, God Most High, the world, and the Hereafter. Of these, two are to be sought and two to be escaped: escaping from the self in order to seek God Most High, and escaping from the world in order to seek the Hereafter. Consequently, thou must turn from thy self to God Most High and thou must turn from the world to the Hereafter. Patience, fear, and repentance are all the preliminaries of this. Love for the world is among the Destroyers, as we have discussed its treatment;[1513] while enmity to the world and cutting oneself off from it are among the Deliverers. Now we shall explain these: poverty and asceticism are among them. First, thou must learn the true nature of these.

The True Nature of Poverty and Asceticism

Know that a poor man is he who does not have what he needs and does not obtain it. First of all, a human being needs his own existence; then, he needs his own continuance. Then, he needs food, money, and many other things. None of these things is under his control and he is in need for all of them. The rich person is he who has no need of anything other than himself, and this is not other than the One, Exalted be His Glory! All else that comes into existence of jinn, mankind, angels, and devils—none of them have control over their own existence or continuation. As a result, in reality, all are poor. It is for this that God Most High says: *And God is the Rich One and ye are the poor.* (Q. 47:38) God is without any need and ye are all poor. Jesus (A) explained the poor this way, saying: "*I am become a surety for my deeds, but the affair is in the Hand of Another; verily, there is no poor man poorer than I.* I am the pledge of my own deeds and the key to my deeds is in the Hand of Another. Which poor man is poorer than I?" Indeed, God Most High also explained this, saying: *And my Lord is the Rich, the Possessor of mercy. If He so desires, He may remove you and make whom He pleases successors after you.* (Q. 6:133) He said: "He is rich who, if He wishes, may destroy all and create a new race." Therefore, all people are poor, but the word "poor" on the tongues of the Sufis is applied to a person who sees himself in this character. This state dominates him so

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[1512] Al-Ghazzali is referring to the four Topics of the Prolegomena at the beginning of this work.

[1513] See Chapter Five of the Third Pillar.

that he knows that he has nothing and that he has no control over anything in this world and in the next world, neither in the origin of creation, nor in the continuation of creation.

As for what a group of fools say—that thou art poor when thou dost not perform any devotion and then, when thou performest acts of devotion and credit the spiritual reward to thyself, then thou hast something and thou art not poor. This is the seed of heresy[1514] and Libertinism[1515] that Satan has sown in their souls and Satan sows (it) by these means for the fools who claim shrewdness. For, he conveys an evil import to good words, so that the fool is deceived by those words and imagines that he himself is clever. It is as though a person were to say: "Whoever has God, has everything; therefore, he must become free of God Most High in order to be poor." Rather, poor is he who performs devotions; as Jesus (A) says: "Devotion is not mine, nor is it under my control, rather I am its pledge." In short, the meaning of poverty intended by the Sufis is not the object in this place, nor is the explanation of human poverty in all things. Rather, we intend to discuss poverty from wealth. Of a hundred thousand things needed by a person that he lacks, wealth[1516] is one of them.

Therefore, know that the non-existence of wealth is either because a man refrains from it by choice, or that he does not obtain it. If he refrains from it, he is called an ascetic, but if he does not earn it, he is called poor. There are three states of poverty:

One is that one does not have wealth, but pursues it as much as one is able. He is called the "avaricious poor man." The second is that one does not seek it and if it is given to him, he does not accept it and it is repugnant to him. He is called an ascetic. The third is he who neither seeks it nor does he reject it. If it is given to him, he accepts it; if is not given, he does not ask for it. He is called a contented poor man.

We shall first discuss the virtue of poverty, then the virtues of asceticism; for there is also a virtue in the absence of wealth, even though man is greedy for it.

[1514] "heresy" (*zandaqah*): This particular heresy is the belief in the two principles of light and darkness that was the basis of the ancient Iranian religion and had great influence in the Graeco-Roman world, affecting even Christianity and Judaism. The Arabic word *zandaqah* derives from the *Zand*, which was a commentary on the *Avesta*, the sacred scripture of the Zoroastrians, who were called fire worshippers. The term is also used more generally to signify heresy.

[1515] "Libertinism" (*ibāḥat*): See Note 165.

[1516] "wealth": *māl*. It should be remembered that the word *māl* denotes wealth in a general sense: it can be money, precious metals, jewels, personal property, clothing, landed property, or just anything of value. The English word "wealth" usually is used to mean "great wealth," but here it means these things in any amount, great or little. It is not synonymous with "rich," nor is it restricted to "money."

The Virtue of Poverty

Know that God Most High says: *for the poor emigrants;* (Q: 59:8)—the "poor" take precedence over the "emigrants."[1517] And the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High loves the pious poor man having a family." And he said: "O Bilal, try to be poor when thou intend to leavest this world, not rich." And he said: "The poor of my people shall enter heaven five hundred years before the rich." In another Tradition, it is "forty years." Perhaps, he intended in the latter (version) the avaricious poor person and in the former (version) the happy, contented poor person. And he said: "The best of my people are the poor and the earliest persons to walk about heaven will be the weak." And he said: "I have two callings. Whoever loves both of them, loves me: poverty and defense of the faith." It is related that Gabriel (A) said: "O Muhammad, God Most High greets thee and says: 'Dost thou desire that I change all of the mountains of the earth into gold so that they will come with thee where thou wishest?' He said: 'No, O Gabriel, for the world is the house of those without houses and the wealth of those without wealth. The accumulation of wealth in it is the work of fools." And (Gabriel) said: *"O Muhammad, God has made thee firm in firm speech."*

Jesus (A) passed by someone sleeping. He said: "Arise and remember God." (The man) asked: "What dost thou want from me? I have left the world and its inhabitants." (Jesus) said: "Then sleep, O friend, sleep well." Moses (A) passed by a sleeper sleeping on the ground who had placed an adobe brick under his head. He had nothing other than a coarse cloth. (Moses) said: "O Lord God, this servant of Thine is lost. He has nothing." Revelation came: "O Moses, dost thou not know that I withhold the world totally from him to whom I turn My Countenance totally?"

Abu Rafi' says: "A guest came to the Messenger (S) and he did not have anything. He said to me: 'Go to such-and-such a Jew and ask him to lend me some flour which I shall return to him on the first of Rajab.'[1518] I went to him and the Jew said: 'No, by God! I shall not lend anything without security.' I told the Messenger (S) what (the Jew) had said. He said: 'By God. I am trustworthy in heaven and I am trustworthy upon earth. If he had lent it, I would have returned it. Now make this chain mail of mine the surety.' I did that. This verse was revealed to him to make him happy: *And strain not thine eyes toward that which We cause some wedded couples among them to enjoy the flower of the life of*

[1517] Al-Ghazzali means that by God's phrasing it *for the poor emigrants* instead of *for the emigrant poor*, God is stressing poverty over the emigration (from Makkah to Madinah).
[1518] Rajab: the seventh month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

the world... (Q. 20:131)[1519] "Thou shouldst not look out of the corner of thine eye at the world and the inhabitants of the world for all of that is their temptation. That which has been set aside for thee with God Most High is better and more enduring." Ka'b al-Ahbar says: "Revelation came to Moses: 'O Moses, when a poor man turns to thee, say: '*Welcome to the sign of the righteous.*'"

And the Messenger (S) said: "Paradise was shown to me; most of the inhabitants of Paradise were the poor. Hell was shown to me; most of the inhabitants of hell were rich." And he said: "I saw fewer women in Paradise. I asked where they were. They said: '*Their work is the two reds: gold and saffron.* They have been imprisoned by gold and colorful clothing.'" And it has been related: "A prophet passed by the edge of the sea. He saw a fisherman throwing his net. (The fisherman) said: 'In the name of God Most High.' No fish were caught. Another fisherman threw his net, saying: 'In the name of Satan.' He caught a vast number of fish in the net. (The prophet) said: 'O Lord God, I know that all this is from Thee, but what is the reason for this?' God Most High said to the angels: 'Show the places of those two fishermen in heaven and in hell.' They showed them to him. When he saw that, he said: 'O Lord God, I am content.'" And our Messenger (S) said: "The last person among the prophets to enter heaven will be Solomon (A) because of his riches."

And Jesus (A) said: "The rich man will enter heaven with great difficulty."[1520] Our Messenger (S) said: "When God Most High loves a servant, He afflicts him with calamities. If the love is complete, He acquires him." They asked him: "What is (this) acquisition?" He replied: "He leaves him neither wealth nor family." Moses (A) said: "O Lord God, who are Thy friends so that I make take them as friends?" He answered: "Wherever there is a poor person; a poor person meaning complete poverty."

And the Messenger (S) said: "The poor man will be brought forth on the Day of Resurrection. As men apologize to each other, God, may He be honored and glorified, will apologize to him, saying: 'My servant, it was not because of thy humbleness that I withheld the world from thee. Rather, it was so that thou wouldst obtain My generosities and honors. Now, go among these ranks of mankind. Whoever gave thee some food one day for My sake, or gave thee clothing, take his hand and bring him out, for I have put him in thine affair.' The people will be drowning in sweat that day. He will go forth and take the hand of anyone who had been good to him and bring him out from amongst the believers." And he said: "Become acquainted with the poor and do good

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[1519] Al-Ghazzali does not quote the entire verse in Arabic. It continues: *that We may try them thereby. The provision of thy Lord is better and more lasting.* (Q. 20:131)

[1520] Cf.: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Mk. 10:21)

to them, for their wealth is on the way." They asked: "What is that?" He said: "At the Resurrection, they will seize the hand of whoever amongst the believers gave them a drink of water or a bit of food or some old clothes and lead them to Paradise."

And the Commander of the Believers 'Ali (R) relates: "The Messenger (S) said: 'Whenever the people turn to worldly acquisition and its cultivation, and are hostile to the poor, God Most High will afflict them with four things: prolonged famine, the oppression of the ruler, the treachery of judges, and the glory and the strength of the unbelievers and enemies."

Ibn 'Abbas (R) says: "That person is accursed who considers himself abject because of poverty or considers himself mighty because of wealth." It is said: "No rich person was more disgraced than that one in the assembly of Sufyan Thawri. (Sufyan) would not let him come up front and he was at the end of the line, while (Sufyan) had the poor man sit close to his person."

And Luqman said to his son: "O son, because someone wears an old garment, hold him not in contempt; for God Most High is thy God and his God." Yahya bin Mu'adh said: "Wretched son of Adam! If he had feared hell as he feared poverty, he would have been safe from both! If he had sought heaven as he sought the world, he would have attained both! And if he had feared God Most High in his heart as he feared people externally, he would have been fortunate in both places."

Someone brought 10,000 dirhams to Ibrahim Adham. He would not accept it. (The man) importuned much, (so) Ibrahim said: "Dost thou wish that with this sum I erase my name from the roll of the poor? I shall never do that!" And the Messenger (S) said to 'Ayishah: "If thou wishest to see me tomorrow,[1521] live like a poor person. Avoid association with the rich, and do not cast off a tunic until thou hast patched it."

The Virtue of Poverty and Contentment

The Messenger (S) said: "Blessed is the person who has been led to Islam and who has been given self-sufficiency and is content with that." And he said to the poor: "Be content with poverty from within your souls so that ye may obtain the spiritual reward of poverty; if not, ye will not obtain it." This refers to the fact that there is no spiritual reward for the avaricious poor person, but there are explicit Traditions that (assert) that there is also spiritual reward for him. And he said: "There is a key for everything. The key to Paradise is friendship with the patient poor. On the Day of Resurrection, they will be the companions of God Most High." And he said: "The most beloved of the servants of God

[1521] "tomorrow": that is, after death.

Most High is a poor person who is content with what he has and is satisfied with the sustenance which God Most High gives him." And he said: "Tomorrow on the Day of Resurrection there will be no poor person or rich person who will not wish that he had not obtained anything more that his daily food in the world."

God Most High sent a revelation to Ishmael: "Seek Me among the broken-hearted." (Ishmael) asked: "O Lord God, who are they?" (God) said: "Those sincere poor people." And said the Messenger (S): "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High will say: 'Seek out My nobles and My saints from among mankind.' The angels will say: 'O Lord God, which ones are they?' He says: 'The Muslim poor who were content with My decree. Bring them all to Paradise!' They will enter Paradise, while all (others) will still be settling their accounts."

Abu Darda says: "There is no person whose intellect is not defective who would rejoice at an increase of the (things of the) world and would not be sorrowful while life is continually growing shorter. O glory be to God! What goodness is there in a world that increases while life is becoming less?" Someone passed by 'Amir bin 'Abd Qays and saw him eating bread and leeks. He said: "O 'Amir, art thou satisfied with that from the world?" He answered: "I know someone who is satisfied with less than this." (The man) asked: "Who is that?" ('Amir) said: "He who has accepted the world in exchange for the Hereafter is satisfied with less." One day, Abu Dharr Ghaffari was sitting and chatting with some people. His wife came to him and said: "Thou hast been sitting here while, by God, there is nothing in thy house!" He said: "Woman, there is a high obstacle before us and no one will pass over it, save those who travel lightly." His wife was pleased and returned (home).

Excursus: [Is the Patient Poor Man More Virtuous or the Grateful Rich Man?][1522]

Know that the there is a disagreement about whether the patient poor person or the grateful rich person is more virtuous. The correct view is that the patient poor person is more virtuous, and these Traditions are all evidence of this. However, if thou wantest to know the inner secret of affairs, the reality is that whatever prevents thee from the remembrance and love of God Most High is blameworthy. There is the person whose obstacle is poverty and there is the person whose obstacle is great wealth.

The explanation of this is that living according to one's (necessary) sustenance is preferable to (exceeding) it. For, this (necessary) amount is not for the world but for the provision of the way

[1522] From the AA text.

of the Hereafter. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "O Lord, make the food of the family of Muhammad (the amount for their) sustenance." However, it is better that there not be anything in excess of that, because in greed and contentment both are equal, the poor man be greedy or the rich man be greedy. Both are attached to wealth, greedy for it and engrossed in it.

Moreover, the qualities of humanity are beaten down for the poor man because of the trouble he experiences and he becomes disgusted with the world. For the believer, the more his love for the world decreases, his love for God Most High increases. When the world has become his prison—even though he detests it, at the time of death his soul is less concerned with the world. For the rich man, since he has taken benefit from the world and has become habituated to it, his separation has become much more difficult for him. At the time of death, there is a great difference between those two souls. Indeed, the same is valid at the time of worship and conversation with God, because the pleasure that the poor man obtains is never obtained by the rich man. The remembrance of God of the rich man is with the tongue and the exterior of the soul. So long as his soul is not wounded or tired and not made sore with trouble and sorrow, the pleasure of remembrance will not enter the inner depths of his soul. In the same manner, if both are equal in contentment, the poor man is also superior.

However, if the poor person is greedy, while the rich person is grateful and satisfied, and if (the rich man) were to lose his wealth, he would not be particularly upset and would rise to give thanks for that, his soul is purified through gratitude and contentment. But the soul of the avaricious poor person becomes tainted with greed; however, it obtains purification with affliction, trouble, and sorrow. These fall close to each other and, in reality, one's distance and proximity to God Most High is according to his severance from and his attachment to the world.

Yet, if the rich person is thus, that the being or non-being of his wealth is the same to him and his soul is content with that, and he has that which he has for the needs of people—as 'Ayishah (R) spent one-hundred thousand dirhams in one day, but did not buy a dirham's worth of meat for herself to break her fast—this degree is better than the degree of poverty for the soul of him who does not possess this quality. However, if thou evaluatest the states against each other, the patient poor man is superior. For, most of the acts of the rich person are that he give charity and do good.

And in the Traditions, it is related: "The poor protested to the Messenger (S): "The rich have carried off the good of this world and the Hereafter because they give in charity, pay the poor rate, perform the Pilgrimage, and strive earnestly for the faith, while we cannot.' The Messenger (S) treated the poor man who had been sent to him with

kindness and said: '*Welcome to thee who hast come from them.* Thou hast come from a people whom I love. Tell them that whoever endures poverty patiently for the sake of God Most High has four qualities that a rich person shall never have: one is that in Paradise, (they shall have) palaces which will be seen by the inhabitants of Paradise as the inhabitants of the world see the stars. They are not other than the places of the prophets, the poor, and the martyrs. Another is that the poor will enter Paradise five hundred years sooner (than the rich). The third is that when a poor person says: *Glory be to God and praise be to God and there is no god other than God and God is Greater (than all else)* and a rich person says the same, the rich person will never achieve (the poor person's) degree, even though he give 10,000 dirhams as charity with that.' Then the poor said: "*We are content! We are content!* We are pleased! We are pleased!" (The Prophet) said this because remembrance is a seed that, when it finds the soul free of the world and sorrowful and broken, has a great effect in (the soul). But, it bounces back as though from a hard stone from the soul of the rich person who is delighted by the world.

Therefore, since the degree of each one is according to the nearness of his soul to God Most High and his occupation with remembrance of God and his love, and that occupation is according to his freedom from intimacy with something else, and the rich person's soul is never devoid of this intimacy, when will they ever be equal? However, perhaps the rich man may suppose that while he is in the midst of wealth, he is free from it. This is a delusion. Its sign is that which was done by 'Ayishah (R) who spent all as though it were dust. If this would be easy and would be possible—possessing the world while being free of it, why did the prophets avoid (the world) so much and why did they command (against it)? Even the Messenger (S) would say: "Away from me! Away from me!" when the world caught his eye and displayed itself to him.

Jesus (A) says: "Do not look at the wealth of the worldly, for the gleam of its sweetness will drive faith out of your souls." He said this because that sweetness would appear in the soul and crowd out the remembrance of God, for two sweetnesses cannot convene in one soul. In existence, there are not more than two things: God and other-than-God. When thou hast set thy heart on other-than-God, to that degree, thou hast loosened thy ties to God. And to that degree which the ties have been loosened with other-than-God, one is nearer to God Most High. Abu Sulayman Darani says: "The sigh which comes from the soul of the poor man at the time of desire for something of which he is incapable is superior to a thousand years of a rich man's worship." Someone said to Bishr Hafi, may God have mercy upon him: "Offer a supplication for me because I have a family and I have nothing (for them)." He said: "At the time that thy family says there is no bread, there

is no water, and thou are helpless to provide them, and the pain of that surrounds thy soul, at that moment offer a supplication for me, for thy supplication at that time will be superior to mine."

The Rules of Conduct for Poverty

Know that the internal rule of conduct for poverty is satisfaction, and, externally, that one not complain. There are three states for internal poverty:

ONE is that one is joyful in one's poverty and thankful, for he knows that this is God Most High's dispensing of favor to His friends. *THE SECOND* is that if he is not grateful, he is not displeased by God Most High's act, even though he is displeased by poverty, such as a person who has his blood let dislikes the pain of that, but does not dislike the cupper. This, too, is great. *THE THIRD* is that he is dislikes God Most High for it. This is forbidden and nullifies the spiritual reward of poverty. Instead, it is necessary at all times to believe that God Most High does that which must be done and it does not behoove a person to dislike or reject that. Furthermore, externally, one must not complain and one should preserve the veil of patience.

'Ali (R) says: "There is the poor man who will be punished (in the Hereafter). The sign of that is a bad nature, complaint, and anger at the decree of God Most High. Or, perhaps, he will be amongst the people of (spiritual) happiness. The sign of that is a good nature, an absence of complaining, and uttering thanks." In the Traditions, it is related that the concealment of poverty is among the grand treasures.

Another rule of conduct is that one not mix with the rich, not humble oneself before them, and not flatter them. Sufyan says: "When a poor man attends the rich, know that he is a dissimulator; if he attends the ruler, he is a thief."

Another is that in certain circumstances, he should give charity, as much as he is able, and take it from his own (money). The Messenger (S) says: "There is a single dirham which takes precedence over a hundred thousand dirhams." They asked: "Where?" He said: "The man who has not more than two dirhams and gives away one. He is superior to the person who has much and gives a hundred thousand dirhams."

The Rule of Conduct for Receiving Gifts

That is that one should not accept anything that is doubtful, nor should one accept more than is one's need, except when one is in the service of the poor. (In that case), one should accept it. If one accepts in public and gives in private, this is the degree of the truly righteous. If one does not have the strength to give oneself, let him tell the owner to

deliver it to a deserving person. However, it is important that the intention of the giver be expressed, as to whether it is as a gift, as charity, or as hypocrisy.

As for that which is given as a gift, accepting it is a Practice of the Prophet when it is devoid of obligation. If one knows that some (gifts) are devoid of obligation and some are not, one should not accept more than that in which there is no obligation. Someone brought the Messenger (S) oil, dried whey, and a sheep. He returned the sheep, but accepted the others. Someone brought fifty dirhams to Fath Mawsili. He said: "In the Traditions, it is related that whoever refuses something brought to him without his requesting it has refused God Most High." He took one dirham and left the rest. Hasan Basri related the same Tradition, but one day a man brought a purse of silver and many fine clothes to him. He did accept them, saying: "Whoever holds assemblies and accepts things from the people will not see God Most High on the Day of Resurrection, nor will he obtain any portion of it." He may have not accepted this because his intention from holding the assembly was spiritual reward. He knew that it was brought because of the assembly, and he did not want to nullify his integrity.

A friend gave someone something. (The latter) said: "Put it down and consider before I accept it whether the esteem for me in thy soul will be greater if I accept it." Sufyan Thawri would not accept anything and would say: "If I knew that he would not say *that*, I would accept it," *that* meaning boasting and placing one under obligation. There is the person who would accept from his close friends, but not from others, and all would avoid obligation. Bishr Hafi says: "I have never made a request from anyone except from Sari Saqati of whose asceticism I was certain and who would be pleased by giving away something."

However, if one gives with the intention of dissimulation, it is more important to refuse. One of the saints refused something and they criticized him. He said: "It was compassion that I showed them, for they would speak of it. The property would be lost (to them) and also the reward."

But if one gives it for the purpose of charity, if (the recipient) does not fit (the requirements of those deserving charity), he does not accept it. But if he is (qualified as) needy, it is not proper to refuse it. In the Traditions, it is related: "Whoever gives something to someone without his asking for it, (that gift) is some sustenance that God Most High has sent him." And it is said: "Whoever does not accept something given him becomes tried by that which he wants and is not given." Ahmad Hanbal would not accept anything whenever Sari Saqati sent it to him. (Sari) would say: "O Ahmad, beware of the blight of refusing." (Ahmad) said: "Say that again." (Sari) did so. (Ahmad) reflected and then said: "I have enough for a month. Keep that. When I have used up this, I shall accept it."

Disclosing That Begging Without Necessity Is Forbidden

Know that the Messenger (S) has said: "Begging is an abomination and is not lawful except in necessity." The reason for its being an abomination is that there are three bad acts in it:

ONE is that expressing poverty is a complaint against God Most High. If someone's slave asks for something from another, he has defamed his master. The atonement for this is that one not beg except in case of necessity and not in the manner of a complaint.

ANOTHER is that one has degraded oneself, and it is not proper for a Muslim to humble himself before anyone other than God Most High. The deliverance from this is that, as much as possible, one should ask of his friends, relatives, the open-hearted, and the person who will not look upon him with contempt by reason of that request, and that he not become degraded. And, he should approach them, as far as he is able, only when necessary.

THE THIRD is that in it, there is the annoying of that (person approached). Perhaps, that which he gives will be out of shame or hypocrisy, because he fears censure. Consequently, if he gives, he will be upset and not give (the gift) from his heart. If he does not give, he may fall prey to the pain of shame and reproof. The way out of this is that one not ask plainly, but speak indirectly; so that should a person so desire, he may pretend not to have understood. If one speaks plainly, one should not specify (who the addressee is). One should speak to all. Perhaps a rich person may be present and (the one soliciting aid) know that he is liable for the poor rate. It is permissible, even if the man will be annoyed, (to solicit aid) from him when one is deserving to receive from the poor rate.

If there is a rich man and all are watching him and if he does not give, he will be criticized—this too is like singling someone out. However, it is permissible for one to make the request on behalf of someone else who is deserving of receiving from the poor rate, even though (the person being asked) is annoyed. The same is valid if one is deserving of the poor rate oneself. However, it is forbidden to accept that which is given out of fear of censure or shame, for that is like confiscation. They look at the external meaning of the words in a religious judgment, but this is useful (only) in this world. In the next world, they will rely upon the decree of the soul. When the soul testifies that he gave it with displeasure, it is forbidden.

Therefore, from all this it is evident that begging is forbidden, except out of necessity or for some important need. It is not proper that it be done for increasing opulence, eating well, or obtaining fine garments. It is appropriate for the person who is helpless, who possesses nothing and cannot earn any living. Or, though able to earn a living, he is busy acquiring knowledge and would be deprived of obtaining that (if he had to earn his livelihood).

However, if one engages in worship (instead of working), it is not proper to beg. Rather, earning is incumbent upon (such a person). Moreover, if one falls in need of food, but has a book which one does not need in one's house, or an extra prayer rug, or an extra (ragged) garment, or the like, begging is unlawful. One must first spend those.[1523] And, if a person begs in order to provide some luxury for his children or himself, it is forbidden. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever possesses something and begs will come on the Day of Resurrection as a skeleton with all of his flesh fallen away." And he (S) said: "Whoever begs but possesses is receiving the fire of hell, whether it be a little or a lot."

The Messenger (S) was asked: "How much must one have so that begging is nor proper?" According to one Tradition, (he said): "Supper and breakfast."[1524] According to another Tradition, (he said): "Fifty dirhams." However, the fifty dirhams referred to are fifty silver dirhams or something of an equivalent value. For a single person, this would be the amount needed for one year's sustenance. If one does not have this amount and in that town it is established and customary that the time of giving the poor rate and the time of giving charity be one,[1525] if one does not beg, one would remain at a loss for the entire year, begging that amount is permissible. Moreover, supper and dinner are mentioned with respect to a person who is able to beg every day, because for him a day is like a year for the other person. This is with regard to the length of time.

As for the kinds of one's needs, they are basically three: bread, clothing, and shelter. The Messenger (S) said: "The son of Adam has no rights in the world save for three things: food so that his back may be straight, clothing to conceal his nakedness, and a home in which to live. That which is necessary of household goods for a home are also included in that term." And if one has a coarse felt cloak and a straw mat, it is not

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[1523] "One must first spend those" (*kharj kardan*): that is, one must sell them for money or barter them for food.

[1524] "breakfast" (*chāsht*): actually a mid-morning meal. *Chāsht* is the median hour between dawn and noon. Where this meal is customary (usually in agricultural regions), the food taken upon rising at dawn is very light, and the *chāsht* meal much heavier, eaten as a break in the morning labors.

[1525] That is, both the poor rate (*zakāt*) and charity (*sadaqah*) are given at the same time and only once a year.

proper to beg for a coarse woolen blanket. If one has earthenware, it is not proper to beg for a ewer, and there is no limit to this, but one should not do this for something without any important need, for that is a grave sin.

EXCURSUS: [THE DEGREES OF THE POOR]

Know that there are different degrees of the poor. Bishr Hafi says that they are of three degrees: One is he who does not beg and, if given, does not accept. These people are, together with the spiritual, among the sublime. Another is he who does not beg, but, if given, accepts. These are with (God's) favorites in Paradise. The third is he begs, but begs out of necessity. He is among the Companions of the Right Hand.[1526]

Ibrahim Adham, may God have mercy upon him, asked Shaqiq Balkhi, may God have mercy upon him: "How didst thou leave the poor in thy city?" He said: "In the best condition. If they obtain, they give thanks; if they do not obtain, they are patient." Ibrahim said: "I left the dogs of Balkh in the same condition." Shaqiq asked: "Then, how are thy poor?" (Ibrahim) replied: "So that if they do not obtain, they give thanks; and if they obtain, they bestow." (Shaqiq) kissed him on the forehead and said: "The reality is that."

Someone saw Abu al-Hasan Nuri begging with his hand held out. He was astonished and told Junayd. (Junayd) said: "Do not suppose that he was holding his hand out so as to beg from mankind. Rather, (he was begging) from God. He desires goodness and spiritual reward for them so that good may befall them. There is no harm to him (in this)." Then Junayd said: "Go and bring a scale." I went and brought one. He weighed a hundred dirhams and then poured a handful more of silver upon that amount. He said: "Take this to Nuri and give it to him." (The narrator) said: "I was astonished, because the weighing was to make known the amount, so why did he pour more upon that separately?" (The narrator) continued: "I took (the money) to Nuri. He requested a scale and, after weighing out one hundred dirhams, he said: "Give this to him," and he took the rest, saying: "Yes, Junayd is a wise man. He wants to hold both ends of the rope." (The narrator) said: "I remained more astonished at this until I took it back to Junayd and told him what had happened. He said: "*God is He Who is called upon for help*. That which was his, he took and that which was ours he returned." I asked what this was. He said: "The one hundred dirhams was for the spiritual reward of

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[1526] "the Companions of the Right Hand" (*ashāb al-yamin*): This phrase is used several times in 56th Surah of The Holy Quran and once in the 74th Surah. The Companions of the Right Hand are those who will enter paradise, while the Companions of the Left Hand will enter hell.

the Hereafter and that which was extra was for God Most High. He accepted that which was for God and he returned that which we gave for ourselves." The poor in those days were thus. Consequently, their souls were pure so that they knew the each other's thoughts, without the translation of the tongue. If someone is not of this kind, at all events he should at least be in the hope of (being so). If this too is not present, at all events, he should believe in it.

Disclosing the True Nature of Asceticism and Its Virtue

Know that whoever has ice in the heat (of summer) is greedy for that so that when he is thirsty he may cool water with it. If someone comes and buys it for its weight in gold, the greed will depart because of his greed for the gold. He will say: "I shall endure drinking warm water for a day while the gold will stay with me all my life. It is better that I accept (the gold) rather than keep the ice. For, it will not last and will have melted by evening." His not desiring the ice when confronted with something better than that is called asceticism with respect to the ice. The state of the spiritually cognizant person in this world is the same, for he knows that the world is transitory, continually passing and melting. At the time of death it is finished. When he sees the Hereafter pure and eternal, which is never finished and is not sold except by abstaining from the world, in his view, the world becomes contemptible and he abstains from it in exchange for the Hereafter which is better. This state of his is called asceticism, with the condition that this abstemiousness is from the permissible things of the world, as it is itself (already) a religious obligation (to abstain) from the forbidden.

Moreover, the power to do so is a prerequisite. As for that of the world over which one has no control, asceticism is not relevant except insofar as when one is given something, one also does not accept it. But this cannot be known so long as it is not tried. For, when power appears, the self becomes changed into something else and the deceptions it gives alter. Another prerequisite is that one give away and not retain wealth, and that one relinquish rank as well. The absolute ascetic abandons the pleasures of the world and exchanges them from the pleasures of the Hereafter. This is a kind of transaction and a pledge, but in this sale, there is much profit, as God Most High said: *Lo! God has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden will be theirs.* (Q. 9:111) Then, He said: *Rejoice, then, in the bargain that ye have made, for that is the supreme triumph.* (Q. 9:111) God Most High buys the bodies and wealth of the believers with Paradise. And He said: Blessed be this sale for you. Rejoice over this sale for ye get much profit from it.

Know that whoever abandons that world for the sake of showing generosity or for some other reason other than the quest for the Hereafter

is not an ascetic. And know that the selling of the world is a weak asceticism in the view of the spiritually insightful. Instead, the spiritually cognizant is one from before whom the Hereafter departs, just as the world does. For Paradise, too, is the portion of the appetite of the eye, stomach, and genitalia. Instead, he looks upon all of this with the eye of contempt and holds himself greater than that he be at the level of beasts and that which he shares of carnality with the beasts. He pays no attention to this. Rather, he desires nothing from the world or the Hereafter except God Most High, and he will not be satisfied except by spiritual knowledge and witnessing Him. All is contemptible in his sight except Him. This is the asceticism of the spiritually cognizant, and it is permissible for this person to be so that he does not flee from wealth or avoid it. Rather, he accepts it and puts it in its place and gives it to the deserving, just as 'Umar (R) who had all the wealth of the world at his disposal, was free from it in his soul, and just as 'Ayishah spent a hundred thousand dirhams in one day (on others) and did not leave a single dirham with which to break her fast.

So, it may be that a spiritually cognizant person has a hundred thousand dirhams at his disposal and he is (nonetheless) an ascetic, while there is another who does not have one dirham and is not an ascetic. Instead, perfection lies in this: that the soul be untied to the world. One is neither engaged in seeking it, nor in fleeing from it; one is neither at war with it, nor at peace; one neither loves it, nor is hostile to it. For, if a person is hostile to something, he is also occupied with it, just as the person who loves it. Perfection lies in that thou be liberated from all except God Most High. The wealth of the world must be to thee as the water of the sea, and thy hand like the treasury of God Most High. Thou art indifferent as to whether it is more or less, whether it comes or goes. Perfection is this. However, it is (also) the place of the delusion of fools, for whoever is not able to abandon worldly goods starts to delude himself by saying: "I am unencumbered by wealth." If he makes a distinction among the carrying off of his wealth by a deserving person, or its being carried off by seawater, or the carrying off of another's wealth, he is deluded and the compulsion for wealth is inside him. Consequently, the fundamental thing is that one should relinquish wealth and flee from it to escape its thrall.

Someone said to 'Abdullah Mubarak:[1527] "O Ascetic!" He replied: "An ascetic is 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz, for he has all the wealth of the world at his command and though he is powerful, he is abstemious. However, I who have nothing, how can my asceticism be correct?" Ibn

[1527] 'Abdullah Mubarak: Ibn al-Mubarak, see Note 660.

Abi Layla[1528] said to Ibn Sirin:[1529] "Dost thou see how that Abu Hanifah, the son of a weaver,[1530] rejects every decree of religious jurisprudence we issue?" (Ibn Sirin) replied: "I do not know whether he is a weaver's son or what he is, but I do know this: that the world has turned to him and he flees from that. He has turned away from us and we desire him."

Ibn Mas'ud said: "I did not know that there were people among us who loved the world until this verse was revealed: *Some of you desire the world and some of you desire the Hereafter*, (Q. 3:152) and this other verse: *And if We had decreed for them: Lay down your lives or go forth from your dwellings, but few of them would have done it.* (Q. 4:66) When the Muslims said: "If we had known in what lay the love of God Most High, we all would have done it." That verse was revealed at that time. Know that selling of ice for gold does not require much capital. All intelligent people know that the value of the world in comparison with the Hereafter is less, just as the value of ice is less than that of gold. Yet mankind is blind to this for three reasons: one is a weakness of faith, another is the immediate mastery of the appetites, and the third is putting off and procrastination and promising oneself: "After this, I shall do it." The most common reason is the mastery of the carnal appetites with which one cannot contend on the spot. One holds on to the cash (of this world) and forgets the credit (of the Hereafter).

The Virtue of Asceticism

Know that everything we have cited concerning the blame for the love of the world is evidence of this. Moreover, the love of the world is one of the Destroyers, while enmity for it is one of the Deliverers. Let us relate in this place some of the Traditions about enmity for (the world). The greatest praise for asceticism is that which has been attributed to the learned in the Quran. When Qarun[1531] came out with his own entourage, adorned, the people would say: "Would that this were

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[1528] Ibn Abī Layla: Ibn Abi Layla bin Shubramah. An authority on religious jurisprudence at the time of Abu Hanifah (see Note 400), he was given a government judgeship at Kufah by Caliph Mansur. Abu Hanifah criticized one of his decisions publicly, causing Ibn Abi Layla to complain to the governor who forbade Abu Hanifah to issue any religious legal opinions (*fatwā*). (Hussain)

[1529] Ibn Sirin: The text in *The Revival* and AA's Persian edition, following that, has Ibn Shubramah.

[1530] Abu Hanifah, see Note 400. The epithet "son of a weaver" is meant to be derogatory, as weavers were popularly held to be socially inferior, a prejudice unfortunately still alive in parts of the contemporary Islamic world.

[1531] Qārūn: As proverbial for wealth in the Islamic world as Croesus is in the Western world. Qarun is usually identified with the Biblical Korah, whose story is told in *Numbers* 16. Qarun is referred to three times in the Quran: 40:25; 29:24-25; 28:76-82. In both versions, he opposed Moses and perished by being swallowed up by the earth.

mine!" *But those who had been given knowledge said: Woe unto you! The reward of God is better!* (Q. 29:80) Those who were learned said that the spiritual reward of the Hereafter is better than all of that. It is for this that it has been said that the eyes of wisdom become opened in the soul of whoever is an ascetic for forty days in the world. And the Messenger (S) said: "If thou desirest that God Most High love thee, become abstemious in this world." When Harithah[1532] said to the Messenger (S): "I am truly a believer," (the Messenger) asked: "What is its sign?" (Harithah) answered: "This self of mine is become so horrified at the world that gold and stone are equal to me and thou wouldst say that I peer into heaven and hell." (The Messenger) said: "Preserve that well, for thou hast found what is necessary." Then he said: "This is a servant whose soul God Most High has illuminated: *A servant whose heart God has illuminated.*"[1533]

When this verse was revealed: *And whomsoever it is God's will to guide, He expands his bosom unto the Surrender*, (Q. 6:125) [1534] (the Messenger) was asked: "O Messenger of God, what is this expansion?" He answered: "That one's soul become horrified at this habitation of delusion and turn to the habitation of the everlasting and that one begin before death to prepare the provisions for after death." And the Messenger (S) said: "Be modest before God Most High, as the modesty due before him." They said: "Are we not modest?" He answered: "Then, why do ye amass wealth ye will not be able to consume and why do ye build residences which will not be your (ultimate) residences?"

One day the Messenger (S) was giving a sermon and he said: "Whoever brings the creed *There is no god but God* (to the Hereafter) soundly, untainted by anything else—Paradise is his." 'Ali (R) rose and said: "O Messenger of God, explain what it is that must not be mixed with that." He replied: "Love for the world and the seeking of it, for there are persons whose speech is the speech of the prophets, but whose deeds are the deeds of the oppressors. Whoever brings *There is no god but God* untainted with that, his place is Paradise." And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever is an ascetic in the world, God Most High opens the gate of wisdom to his soul and his tongue becomes articulate with the utterance of that creed. The malady of the world and its medicine and remedy are shown to him, and it carries him safely from this world to the Abode of Peace." And the Messenger (S), in the company of his companions passed by a herd of camels in the middle of the desert. All of the camels were fine, fat, and pregnant. The most precious property of the Arabs is the camel because they get milk from them as well as meat. They

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[1532] Hārithah: Harithah bin Suraqah bin al-Harith. He was martyred at the battle of Badr, AH2/624CE.

[1533] "*A servant whose heart God has illuminated*" (*'abdun nawwara allāh qalbahu*).

[1534] "*the Surrender*": Al-Islām.

transport burdens, and also give them wool and wealth. The Messenger (S) turned away and did not look at them. They said: "O Messenger of God, these are the wealth of the Arabs. Why dost thou not look upon them?" He said: "God Most High has forbidden me from looking upon them. He has said: *And strain not thine eyes toward that which We cause some wedded pairs among them to enjoy the flower of the life of the world.*" (Q. 20:131)

And they said to Jesus (A): "If thou commandest us to build a house, how long wouldst thou worship in it?" He said: "Go and build a house upon the water." They said: "How can a house be built upon water?" He said: "With the love of the world, how can one worship?" And our Messenger (S) said: "If thou desirest that God Most High love thee, give up the world. If thou desirest that men love thee, surrender (to them) that which they love."

Hafsah[1535] said to her father: "O father, if booty arrives from (conquered) towns, wear finer clothes and arrange for better food so that perhaps someone who is with thee would eat it." ('Umar) said: "No one knows the condition of the husband better than his wife. Thou knowest the condition of the Messenger (S) better than anyone. By God above thee, the Messenger had been on his mission and prophethood for several years. If he and his family were sated in the morning, they would be hungry at night. If they were sated at night, they would be hungry in the morning. By God above thee! He passed many years not eating his fill of dates, until the conquest of Khaybar. By God above thee! Thou knowest that when one day the food was placed upon a table, he became altered with dislike (of that) until he ordered that (the food) be placed upon the ground. By God above thee! Thou know that at night he would sleep upon a doubled coarse blanket.[1536] Once, it was folded into four layers so that it would be softer. He said: 'The blanket in four layers was softer last night, but it kept me from performing the night formal prayer.'[1537] He said: 'Do not make it more than two thicknesses, as it used to be.' By God above thee! Thou knowest that when his garment would be washed and Bilal would cry the summons to the pre-dawn prayer, the garment would not be dry and he would not be able to come out because he had no other garment. By God above thee! Thou knowest that a woman of the Bani Zafar[1538] was weaving a wrapper and a cloak for him. Before

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[1535] Hafṣah: the daughter of 'Umar and a wife of the Prophet. The widow of an early convert to Islam, she had considerable influence in his counsels. Her father, 'Umar, became the second caliph of Islam (rgd. AH13/634CE to AH23/644CE).

[1536] "a doubled coarse blanket (*gilīm*)": that is folded once so that it had two layers of thickness.

[1537] That is: because of the softness, he slept so soundly that he did not wake up to perform the prayer.

[1538] Banī Ẓafar: other mss. have Banī Nuḍayr. Both are names of Arab tribes of the period.

both were finished, she sent one. The Messenger (S) came outside holding that behind and knotted in the front: he had nothing more than that (to wear)." Hafsah said: "I know all of that." Then, they wept, 'Umar and Hafsah, until they swooned. Then, he said: "Two of my friends have gone before me: that is, Muhammad and Abu Bakr. They were traveling a path. If I travel their path, I shall reach them; if not, I will be taken another way. I follow their hard lives and I am patient so that I may attain that life of eternal comfort together with them."

Some of the Companions said to the first of the Followers: "Your worship is more than the worship of the Companions, but they were better than you, because they were more abstemious in the world." 'Umar said: "Abstaining from the world is both the ease of the soul and the ease of the body." Ibn Mas'ud says: "Two bows of formal prayer by an ascetic in the world are superior to the worship of all the qualified legalists to the end of their lives." Sahl Tustari says: "Thou canst act sincerely when thou dost not fear four things: hunger, nakedness, poverty, and contempt.

Disclosing the Degrees of Asceticism

Know that for the ascetic there are three degrees:

ONE is that he retains the world and his soul looks upon it; but he strives earnestly and is patient. He is called "devout,"[1539] not "ascetic." This is the beginning of asceticism.

THE SECOND is that soul does not look upon the world, but looks upon asceticism and one knows oneself that asceticism is his task. This is an ascetic, but not without deficiency.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one is an ascetic in his asceticism, too. That is, he does not see his own asceticism and he does not consider it a task. He is like the person who intends to go the residence of a king in order to become his minister. A dog at the entrance of the palace blocks his way. He throws a piece of bread to the dog so that it will turn from him to that. Then, he enters the residence of the king and becomes a minister. The whole world is a morsel of food and Satan is the dog at the court of the King of eighteen thousand worlds. He keeps barking. When thou throwest something to him, he turns away from thee. The whole world, in comparison with the Hereafter, is more insignificant than a piece of bread for a viziership; for the Hereafter has no limit. There is no affinity between the finite and the infinite. It was for this that when Abu Yazid[1540] was told: "So-and-so speaks about asceticism." He asked:

[1539] "devout" (*mutazahhid*): or, "one who would be an ascetic."

[1540] Abū Yazīd: the same as Bayazid (see Note 1327).

"Asceticism with regard to what?" They said: "The world." He said: "There is nothing in the world that anyone may be an ascetic about. First, there must be something concerning which one may become an ascetic."

AS FOR THE DEGREES OF ASCETICISM with respect to that for which there is asceticism, they are three:

ONE is that one becomes an ascetic only to escape the torment of the Hereafter. If one is carried off to nothingness, it is permissible. This is the asceticism of the fearful. One day, Malik Dinar said: "Last night I was very audacious with God Most High: I asked Him for Paradise."

THE SECOND is that it is for the spiritual reward of the Hereafter. This is more complete, for this asceticism is with hope and love. This is the asceticism of the hopeful.

THE THIRD—and this is perfection—is that there be in one's soul neither the fear of hell, nor the hope for Paradise. Rather, the love for God Most High itself expels the love for the world and Hereafter from one's soul. One is ashamed to pay attention to anything except Him. As Rabi'ah used to say when talking about Paradise: "*The neighbor, then the house*." That is, the master of the house is better than the house. In the view of the person in whom the pleasure of the love for God Most High has appeared, the pleasures of Paradise are like the pleasure of the children's playing with sparrows in comparison with the pleasure of kingship. Perhaps, the child prefers that play to being a king, for he has no knowledge of the pleasure of rule itself, as he is still immature. He for whom a desire remains other than the witnessing of the Divine Presence is still immature and has not achieved puberty. He has not achieved the degree of manhood.

As for the degrees of asceticism with respect to that which one abandons, there are differences of opinion. There is the person who abstains from some part of the world. The perfection of that is that he abandon all that has delight for himself in which there is neither necessity nor need on the way of the Hereafter. For, the world is composed of the pleasures of the self from property, rank, eating, wearing, speaking, sleeping, association with people, learning, assemblies, telling stories—everything that is for the delight of the self is from the world, except that which is used to call (people) to God.

Abu Sulayman Darani says: "I have heard many words about asceticism, but in our opinion it is that thou abandon whatever distracts thee from God Most High." He said: "Whoever has busied himself with marriage, travel, and writing Traditions has turned to the world." He was asked: "What is '*Save him who brings to God a sound heart*'?" (Q. 26:89) He replied: "A sound heart is that in which there is nothing except God Most High." John the son of Zechariah (A) would wear sackcloth so

that the softness of a garment had no comfort for his body, as that was one of the delights of the self. Then, his mother begged him to wear woolen clothes because his skin had been rubbed raw by the sackcloth. [He put on (the woolen garment).][1541] Revelation came to him: "O John! Thou hast chosen the world over Me!" He wept and put the sackcloth back on.

Know that this is the extreme of asceticism and a person may not reach that degree; but the degree of each person is in accordance with the amount (of the world) he has abandoned. Just as repentance for some sins is correct, so too asceticism in some things is correct. That is, it is not without spiritual reward and usefulness.[1542] However, that station which is promised the repenter and the ascetic in the Hereafter is for those who abstain from all.

Disclosing The Details of That With Which the Ascetic Must Be Content in the World

Know that mankind has fallen into the chasm of the world, and there is no limit to the valleys of the world. But six things are necessary in the world: foodstuffs, clothing, shelter, household utensils, women, wealth, and rank:

THE FIRST NECESSITY is food. It is evaluated as to kind, amount, and the sauce.[1543]

As for the kind: the least[1544] thing which gives nourishment, even if it is all chaff. The median is barley bread and bread made from millet. The best is bread of unsifted wheat. If it is sifted, it is beyond the limit of asceticism and has become luxury.

As for the amount: the least is ten *sitir*s.[1545] The median is half a *mann*[1546]and the most is a *mudd*.[1547] This is the amount that is the right of the poor. More than this causes a loss of the asceticism of the stomach.

[1541] From the AA text.

[1542] Even if one does not repent for all sins, repenting from some is correct and a good step. So too, if one cannot abstain from everything in the world, but does abstain from some things, then, there is spiritual merit in that limited asceticism. Something is better than nothing.

[1543] "sauce" (*nān-khwurash*): Literally, "that which is eaten with bread" usually a meat or fish dish. Most often this takes the form of a stew.

[1544] In this passage, the "least" refers to the greatest degree of asceticism with regard to the item of necessity, the "best" or "highest" is the least degree of asceticism while still remaining what is properly called asceticism. Better than that nullifies asceticism.

[1545] *sitīr*: A measure of weight. Steingass gives it a value of 6.5 drachmas: a fortieth part of a *mann*. *Farhang-i'Amid* also give is a value of a fortieth part of a *mann*, equal to 16 *mithqals*.

As for keeping (foodstuffs) for the future, the highest degree is that one should not retain anything other than what is needed to prevent hunger, for a principle of asceticism is the brevity of hope. The median of that is that one keeps for a month or for forty days. The lowest degree of that is keeping (foodstuffs sufficient for) a year. If one keeps (foodstuffs) for more than a year, one is deprived asceticism, because whoever has the hope of living beyond a year is not properly an ascetic. The Messenger (S) used to store enough for his family for a year, as they did not have strength to endure (less). However, he would not keep anything over night for himself.

As for the sauce, the least is vinegar and leeks. The median is oil and that which is made with that. The best is meat: if one eats it continually, asceticism is gone. If one does not eat it more than once or twice a week, one does not fall completely out of the degree of asceticism.

As for the time of eating, one must not eat more than once a day; is better if one eats once every two days. However, if one eats twice in one day, this is not asceticism.

Whoever desires to comprehend asceticism must learn the states of the Messenger (S) and the Companions. 'Ayishah (R) says: "There were times when there was no lamp in the house of the Messenger for forty days, and there was no food except dates and water." Jesus (A) said: "For whoever seeks Paradise, there is much eating of barley bread and sleeping on dung heaps with dogs." And he used to say: "O disciples, eat barley bread and do not crowd about wheat, for one cannot rise to the gratitude for that."

THE SECOND NECESSITY is clothing. The ascetic must not have more than one (set of) clothing. When he washes it, he remains naked. If there are two, he is not an ascetic. The least is a cap, a tunic, and footgear. Usually, with these there are a turban and drawers.[1548]

As for the kind: the least is sackcloth, the median is coarse wool, and the highest is coarse cotton. If it soft and fine, then asceticism has departed. At the time that the Messenger[1549] (S) received the command. 'Ayishah (R brought a coarse cloak and a coarse wrapper and said: "These were his clothes and nothing more."

[1546] *mann*: Steingass gives it a weight of 40 *sers*, a *ser* equaling a *sitīr*. In Arabic it is the weight of two *ritls*.

[1547] *mudd*: A dry measure equal to two *ritls* or one and a third *ritls*. As much as a full grown man can hold in both hands. (Steingass)

[1548] "drawers" (*izār-i pāy*): these are the loose pajama-like pants or drawers still favored in many regions of the Islamic world. The word "pajama" derives from the Persian *pāy-jāmah*, literally: "the clothing of the feet or legs." They are normally held up with a drawstring around the waist, but an elastic band is often used these days.

[1549] "received the command": died.

In the Traditions, it is related: "No person dons the clothing of sensuality[1550] but that God Most High averts Himself from him, even if He loves him, until he takes them off." The cost of the two garments of the Messenger (S)—the breeches and the cloak—was not more than 15 dirhams. There were times when his clothing was so crusted that one would have said that it was the clothing of an oil-presser. Once, he was brought patterned clothing as a gift. He put it on, then took it off, saying: "Take this to Abu Jahm[1551] and bring his coarse cloak. The decoration on this distracts my eyes." One time, he renewed his sandal[1552] straps. His eye fell upon them during formal prayer. He said: "Bring back the old straps; I do not want these new ones because they distract my eyes." And on the pulpit he took off a ring and threw it down when he noticed it once, saying: "A glance at that and a glance at you."[1553] Once, he was brought a new pair of fine footwear. He prostrated himself to God Most High and came outside. He gave them to the first poor person he saw and said: "They pleased me and I feared that God Most High would hold me in enmity for that reason. That was why I prostrated myself."

'Ayishah (R) said that the Messenger had said: "If thou desirest to comprehend me, be satisfied with that much of the world as is the provision for a traveler. Do not take off a tunic so long as thou hast not patched it." They counted fourteen patches that 'Umar (R) had made on his clothes. 'Ali (R), during the time of his caliphate, bought a tunic for three dirhams and he tore off all of the sleeve beyond the wrist. He said: "Thanks be to the Lord Whose robe of honor this is." Someone has said: "I valued all of the clothing that Sufyan Thawri wore, with his sandals. They were not worth more than a dirham and two thirds."[1554] In the Traditions, it is related: "Whoever is able to be ostentatious in clothing but is humble for the sake of God and restrains himself from display, has a right that God Most High exchanges for him for splendid celestial garments of silk upon thrones of rubies."

'Ali (R) said: "God Most High has struck a covenant with the leaders of guidance that their garments be the least of mankind so the

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[1550] "the clothing of sensuality" (*jāmah-yi shahwat*)": that is, luxurious clothing.

[1551] Abu Jahm: possibly the Abū al-Jahm Al-ʿAdawī mentioned by Ibn Khallikan as having sold his house for a hundred thousand dirhams in his essay concerning Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali (d. AH69/688-9CE). This would make him a probable contemporary of the Prophet.

[1552] "sandal(s)": The word used here, *naʿlayn*, is the Arabic dual of *naʿl*, which usually means "horseshoe." In the dual, it is used to refer a variety of human footgear—slippers, clogs, sandals etc., and it so used in Persian. Today, it usually refers to the slippers worn by mullahs.

[1553] that is, he was looking back and forth, from the ring to the people and back to the ring, and so forth.

[1554] "a dirham and two thirds" (*diramī wa chahār dāng*): Literally, a dirham and four sixths. A *dāng* is a sixth of anything.

rich may emulate them and the poor not become dejected." Fadalah bin 'Ubayd[1555] was the commander of Egypt. He was seen walking barefooted wearing the meanest clothing. They said to him: "Thou art the commander of a land! Do not do thus!" He said: "Our Messenger (S) prohibited us from luxury and commanded that we go about barefooted from time to time." Muhammad bin Wasi'[1556] went to Qutaybah bin Muslim[1557] wearing woolen clothes.[1558] (Qutaybah) asked him: "Why hast thou put on wool?" (Muhammad) remained silent. (Qutaybah) said: "Why dost thou not answer?" (Muhammad) replied: "I do not wish to say because of asceticism and thereby indulge in self-praise. Or (to say) out of poverty, for then I would have complained against God Most High."

Solomon (A) was asked: "Why dost thou not wear fine clothing?" He replied: "What has a slave of God to do with fine clothes? When I am freed tomorrow, there will be no lack of fine clothing."[1559] 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz had a sackcloth (garment) which he put on at night and performed formal prayer. He did not put it on during the day, lest the people see it. Hasan Basri said to Farqad al-Sanji:[1560] "Dost thou suppose that thou hast some superiority over others because of that coarse cloth thou hast put on? I have heard that most of the inhabitants of hell are wearers of coarse cloth."

THE THIRD NECESSITY is shelter. The lowest of this is reserved (for those) who have no home and who are content with a corner of the mosque or some retreat. The most is that one have a room he owns or

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[1555] Fadālah bin 'Ubayd: Fadālah bin al-Ansārī. He was a native of Madinah who converted to Islam (hence the epithet *al-Ansāri*). Active in the military enterprises of early Islam, besides being in Egypt he also took part in the attack on Cyprus under the Umayyad caliph Mu'awiyah (rgd. AH41/661CE to AH60/680CE).

[1556] Muhammad bin Wāsi': Abu Bakr Basri. He was a soldier who became an ascetic and a Traditionist. He died in AH121/738CE.

[1557] Qutaybah bin Muslim was born about AH50/670CE. He became the governor of Khorasan (northeastern present-day Iran) in AH85/704CE and conquered Kharazm (parts of present-day Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and northern Afghanistan) in AH94/712CE. He died AH96/715CE.

[1558] Wearing coarse wool was the sign of Sufism, the word "Sufism" probably being derived from their custom of wearing woolen garments. It was also cheaper than fine linen or cotton.

[1559] This story ascribing asceticism to Solomon is in sharp contrast to the Biblical narrative where his splendid apparel and court are described in considerable detail. See I Kgs: 4-10. Another version of the same occurs in II Ch: 1-9. In the time of Jesus, Solomon's wealth and opulence had become proverbial: "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." (Matthew 6:28-29)

[1560] Farqad al-Sanjī (or al-Sinjī): a mystic and disciple of Hasan al-Basri. Farqad died in AH131/748-9CE. Both HK and AA have *Sabkhī*, but I follow *The Fihrist* in this. Again the difference is the place of a single dot.

rents according to his need. It is not high, nor is it decorated, and does not exceed one's need. If the ceiling is more than six cubits[1561] high and plastered, it exceeds (the limits) of asceticism. In short, the purpose of shelter is to keep one from cold, heat, rain, and wind. One should not look for (anything) except this.

It has been said that the first thing which appeared of lengthening hopes after the Messenger (S) was construction with plaster and doubling the hems of clothing, for in (the Prophet's) age there was but a single hem. 'Abbas (R) constructed a high window. The Messenger (S) ordered that it be removed. One day, he passed by a high dome. The Messenger (S) asked: "Whose is that?" They said: "So-and-so's." After that, that person came to the Messenger (S). He did not look at him until that person asked the reason for that. They told him. He went away and destroyed the dome and the Messenger's (S) heart was pleased by that and he supplicated (God) on his behalf. Hasan (R) says: "The Messenger (S) did not place one brick upon another or one timber upon another during his entire lifetime." And the Messenger (S) said: "For whomever God Most High desires the bad, He destroys his wealth in water and earth."[1562]

'Abdullah (bin) 'Umar (R) says: "The Messenger (S) passed by us. He asked: 'What is this that ye are doing?' We said: 'It is a house the reeds of which have rotted. We are repairing it.' He said: 'There is an affair closer to hand than that which takes time; that is, death.'" And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever builds more than is necessary will be tasked on the Day of Resurrection to lift it up." Noah (A) built a house of reeds. They said: "What would it matter if it were of wood and sun-baked brick?" He said: "This is plenty for a person who must die." And the Messenger (S) said: "Whatever house a servant of God builds will have evil consequences on the Day of Resurrection, except for that which protects him from the heat and the cold."

'Umar saw a villa on the road to Syria built of burnt brick. He said: "I never knew that in this nation they build that which Haman[1563] built for Pharaoh," meaning (Pharaoh's) burnt bricks.[1564] (Pharaoh) said: "*Kindle fire for me, O Haman, to bake the mud.*" (Q. 28:38) And in the Traditions, it is related: "When a servant of God builds higher than six cubits, an angel cries from heaven, saying: 'O most corrupt of the corrupt! Where art thou coming?'" That is: "Thou shouldst go down into

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[1561] Approximately 9 or 10 feet.

[1562] "water and earth": the materials commonly used for construction in that period.

[1563] Hāmān: the prime minister of Pharaoh mentioned in Q. 28:7; 29:38; and 40:38. His identity is discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* and the volume extracted from that, *Moses*.

[1564] In Exodus 5:5-21 Pharaoh orders that the captive Hebrews be assigned the task of making bricks.

the earth in a grave. How darest thou to come towards heaven?" Hasan Basri (R) says: "In the rooms of the Messenger (S), one's hand would reach the ceiling." Fudayl says: "I am not astonished by a person who builds and leaves it. Rather, I am astonished by the one that sees (an abandoned building) and not does not learn the lesson."

THE FOURTH NECESSITY is the household equipment. The highest degree of this is that of Jesus (A) who possessed nothing except a comb and a jug. He saw someone combing his beard and mustache with his fingers and he threw away the comb. He saw someone drinking water with his hand, and he threw away the jug. The farthest degree of this is that one have one of each necessary thing made of wood or pottery. If they are made of bronze or brass, they are not (within the limits) of asceticism. The forefathers endeavored to apply a single article to many tasks.

The Messenger (S) had a leathern pillow stuffed palm fiber. His carpet was of coarse fabric, folded over into two thicknesses. One day 'Umar saw the marks left by a date-fiber mat on (the Messenger's) side and he wept. (The Messenger) asked: "Why dost thou weep, O 'Umar?" ('Umar) said: "Caesar and Chosroes, the enemies of God, are in those comforts, while thou, the Messenger of God and the friend of God, art in these straits!" (The Messenger) said: "O 'Umar, art thou not pleased that their comforts are of the world and ours are of the Hereafter?" ('Umar) answered: "I am." Then (the Messenger) said: "Therefore know that it is thus."

Someone entered the home of Abu Dharr (R). In the entire house, there was nothing. He said: "Dost thou not have anything in thy house?" (Abu Dharr) answered: "I have a house to which I send everything that I receive," that is, the next world. (The visitor) said: "As long as thou art in this stopping place, there is no escaping (the need) for goods." (Abu Dharr) replied: "God will not place our stopping place here."

When 'Umayr bin Sa'd,[1565] the commander of Hims, went to 'Umar, ('Umar) asked: "What dost thou have of the world?" ('Umayr) answered: "I have a staff upon which I support myself and with which I kill snakes. I have a leathern bag in which I put food. I have a bowl from which I eat food and in which I wash my head and clothing. I have a ewer from which I drink water and purify myself; for, everything else of the world is subordinate to that which I have."

The Messenger (S) returned from a journey and went to the door of the house of Fatimah (R). He saw a curtain on the doorway and two silver rings on her hand. He turned back from within the house out of

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The [1565] 'Umayr bin Sa'd: the son of a reciter (of the Quran) and a Companion. An abstemious man of integrity, 'Umar bin Khattab appointed him governor of Hims in central Syria.

displeasure. When Fatimah learned the cause of his displeasure, she sold the two rings for one and a half dirhams and gave the money together with the curtain away in charity. Then, the Messenger (S) was pleased with her and said: "Thou hast done well." There was also a curtain at the door of the quarters of 'Ayishah. The Messenger (S) said: "Whenever my eye falls on that, I remember the world. Take it down and give it to so-and-so." And 'Ayishah (R) says: "The Messenger (S) used to sleep on a folded coarse blanket. One night, I spread a soft rug for him. He spent the night twisting and turning. The next day he said: "I was not able to sleep last night. Bring back that coarse blanket."

Once, gold was brought and (the Messenger) divided it (amongst the Muslims). At night, no more than six dinars were left. He did not sleep that night, until late in the evening, he also sent that money to a person, and then he slept soundly. Then, he said: "What would be my condition if I had died and those six dinars had remained with me?" Hasan Basri says: "I have come to know seventy of the Companions of the Messenger. No one amongst them had a garment other than that which he was wearing. They never placed a veil between themselves and the earth.[1566] They used to lay their sides on the earth when going to sleep and threw that garment over themselves."

THE FIFTH NECESSITY is marriage. Sahl Tustari and Sufyan 'Uyaynah[1567] (R) and others have said that there is no asceticism in marriage. But the most ascetic of mankind was the Messenger (S) and he loved women and had nine wives. 'Ali (R), with his asceticism, had four wives and ten concubines. Know from this that on the path of asceticism it is not intended that it be permissible for a person to withhold from marriage in order not to have pleasure and (sexual) intercourse. Marriage is for children and there is much benefit in that and the continuance of generations. It is as though one were not to eat or drink at all in order not to have the pleasure of those and (then) perish because of this while his descendants are cut off. However, if marriage distracts a person from God Most High, not marrying is better. If the carnal appetite overcomes, it is (an act of) asceticism to seek a woman who is not beautiful. For, that quiets passion instead of exciting it. Ahmad Hanbal (R) was given a beautiful woman. They told him that she had a sister who was more intelligent, but had only one eye. He asked for the more intelligent one. Junayd says: "I prefer that a disciple guard his heart against three things: earning, marriage, and recording Traditions." And he says: "I do not like that a Sufi recite or write, for thought becomes fragmented and does not coalesce."

[1566] That is, they slept on the bare ground.
[1567] Sufyan 'Uyaynah: See Note 990.

THE SIXTH NECESSITY is wealth and rank. We have discussed these in the Pillar of the Destroyers, for both are fatal poisons. A little of them, in accordance with need, is a medicine and not worldliness. Indeed, all that is necessary for religion is also from religion. Khalil[1568] (A) asked a friend for a loan. A revelation came: "Why didst thou not ask for it from thine own Friend?" He answered: "O Lord God, I knew that Thou dost hold the world in enmity and I feared to ask for something of the world from Thee." (God) said: "Whatever is needed (to satisfy basic wants) is not (counted as) worldliness."

In short, when one has abandoned appetites and excesses and is content with a necessary amount of wealth and rank, one's soul is liberated and does not love the world. The point is that when one goes to the next world, he will not bow his head in shame, nor turn backwards to look (longingly) at this world. The person looks back whose place of ease and tranquillity is this world. However, with respect to him (who has abandoned appetites and excess), it is like a lavatory that he does not desire except at the time of need. Since he is freed from this need at death, why should he turn back to it?

But as for the person who has tied his soul to this world, he is like the person at a place from which he does not want to leave. He binds chains from there securely around his own neck, and he even ties the hairs of his head firmly to that place so that when they raise him from it, he remains suspended by his own hair. So long as all of his hairs are not pulled out by the roots, he will not escape from that and then the scars will remain on him. Hasan Basri says: "I have learned of a people who are more delighted with calamity than ye are with comfort. If they were to see you, they would say: 'They are nothing other than devils.' If ye were to see them, ye would say: 'They are nothing other than madmen.' These people used to delight in calamity, so that their souls would arise and be liberated from the world, so that at the time of death they would not be attached to anything."

[1568] *Khalīl* (friend), an epithet for Abraham. The full version is Khalīl Allāh (the friend of God).

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCERNING INTENTION, TRUTHFULNESS, AND SINCERITY

Know that it has been disclosed to the circumspect that all mankind have been ruined save the worshippers; and all the worshippers are lost save the learned; and all the learned are lost save the implementers; and all the implementers are lost save the sincere; and the sincere are in great danger. Therefore, without sincerity, all pains taken are lost. Moreover, sincerity and truthfulness do not exist except in the Intention. How can a person, who does not know keep, sincerity in (the intention)? Let us discuss the meaning of the Intention in one part, the meaning of the true nature of Sincerity in another part, and the true nature of Truthfulness in a third part.[1569]

PART ONE: CONCERNING INTENTION

First, one must learn the virtue of the Intention, for the spirit of all works is the Intention. The judgment (of the act) belongs to that, and God Most High looks from the deed to the intention. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High does not look at your outward appearance and qualities; He looks at your heart[1570] and deeds." (His) looking at the heart is because it is the locus of intention. And the Messenger (S) said: "Deeds are according to intention. Every person receives from his act of worship that which is his intention for that. Whoever emigrates, that is, who leaves his own town to fight in defense of Islam or to perform the Greater Pilgrimage for the sake of God Most High, his emigration is for the sake of God Most High. Whoever does this in order to obtain some wealth or to marry some woman, his emigration is not for the sake of God Most High. It is for that which he seeks." And he said: "Most of the martyrs of my people die on beds and pillows. Many are killed between two ranks, whose intention God Most High knows better."[1571] And he said: "A servant of God does many good deeds and the angels carry (the deeds) up (to God). God Most High says: 'Expunge that from his record, for he did not do it for Me, but write down such-and-such of his deeds.' They say: 'O Lord God! He has not done that!' (God) says: 'But he had formed the intention to do so.'" And (the Messenger) said: "There are four kinds of people: One has wealth

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[1569] Though the chapter title reverses the second and third topics, this is the order in which Ghazzali actually dicusses them.

[1570] "heart" (*dil*): or, "soul."

[1571] "Many are killed...knows better." That is, many die in battle between the defenders of Islam and their opponents, but only God knows the purity of their intentions: were they fighting solely for Islam, or did the hope of obtaining booty play a part?

and spends it wisely. Another says: 'If I had it, I would do the same.' The reward for both is the same. Another has wealth, but does not use it according to the rule of expenditure, and another says to himself: 'If I had it, I would do the same.' Both are equal in offending and sin. That is, the intention by itself is just like doing it as well."

Anas says: "One day during the Tabuk expedition, the Messenger (S) came out and said: 'In Madinah, there are many people who are our partners in the reward and hardships of travel and the hunger that we endure.' We said: 'Why, when they are not with us?' He said: 'They have stayed back excused, but their intention is the same as ours.'" During a drought, one of the Children of Israel came upon a mountain of sand. He said: "If this had been all wheat, I would have given it all to the poor." Revelation came to the messenger of that era that he should say to that person: "God Most High has accepted thy charity and has given thee as much spiritual reward as if thou hadst had all that wheat and had given it away in charity."

The Messenger (S) said: "There is always poverty before the two eyes of him whose intention and ambition are the world, and he leaves the world as a lover of the world. God Most High keeps the soul of him whose intention and ambition are for the Hereafter rich. He leaves the world and he is an ascetic in it." And the Messenger said: "When the Muslims stand in ranks against the unbelievers, angels begin to write on scrolls: 'So-and-so fights zealously; so-and-so fights with ardor.' Ye say that so-and-so was killed in the way of God Most High. Whoever fights so that the creed of Unity will prevail is on the path of God Most High." And he said: "Whoever marries with the intention of not paying the dowry[1572] is an adulterer. Whoever borrows money with the intention of not repaying it is a thief."

Know that the learned religious scholars have said: "First learn the intention of the deed; then, the deed." Someone said: "Teach me an act that I may be engaged with night and day so that I not be devoid of good at any time." They said: "If thou canst not perform a good deed, then continually form good intentions so that the spiritual reward of that (unperformed deed) may be obtained." Abu Hurayrah said: "Mankind will be assembled on the Day of Resurrection according to their intentions." Hasan Basri says: "Eternal Paradise without end is not with the acts of these few days (of life on earth). Rather, it is with good intentions, for there is no end to (good) intentions."

[1572] "dowry" (*kābīn*): In Islamic law, the dowry is given by the husband to the wife, not the reverse, as was (and still is in many places) the European custom.

THE TRUE NATURE OF INTENTION

Know that a human being does not act so long as he does not have three things: (in Arabic) knowledge, desire, and power; that is (in Persian), knowledge, desire, and power.[1573] For example, if one does not see food, one does not eat. If one sees it, but if there is no need (to eat) or desire (for food), one also does not eat. And, if there is desire but the hand is paralyzed, unable to perform work, one also does not eat, for one does not have the power. Therefore, these three things precede all acts. But action is subservient to power, and power is subservient to desire and will, for compulsion compels power to act. However, need is not subservient to knowledge, for one sees many things and does not desire them. Moreover, without knowledge, desire does not form either; for, why would one desire something one does not know? Intention is composed of all three: of desire, of power, and of knowledge. Desire is what prompts it and sets it to work. That is also called motive, purpose, and intention. All three have one meaning.

Thus, the motivation that has prompted one to act is sometimes one and sometimes two motives that have joined in one thing.

That which is "one" is called "pure." It is like the person who has been sitting down. A lion makes for him. He jumps up and runs away. His intention and his motivation are nothing more than one, and that is flight. In the same way, when some dignitary enters through a door, a person stands up for him. There is no motivation other than to show him honor. This is pure.

As for the motivation being twofold, there are three types:

ONE is that each motivation be thus: If it were single it would impel him to act, as when a poor relative requests a dirham one gives it to him (both) for his kinship and his poverty. (The donor) knows from his own heart that if (the requester) were not poor, he would have given it anyway (because of kinship); and if (the requester) were poor but not a relative, he would also have given it (because of the requester's poverty). These are two motivations and two intentions, mixed together in partnership.

ANOTHER KIND is that one knows that if (the requester) were a relative but not poor, or poor and not a relative, he would not have given it; but since both (requisites) had come together, he was moved to give. The similitude of the first is that of two men who are lifting a stone that each one would be able to do by himself. The similitude of the (second)

[1573] In order to stress his point, Al-Ghazzali first gives the Arabic terms, then follows with the Persian equivalents.

is that of two weak men who, by the strength of each other's arms, lift a stone which each one would not be able to do by himself.

THE THIRD is that one motivation be weak and not impel one to act, while the other is strong enough to cause one to act by itself, but because of the former, doing so is easier; just as when a person performs the obligatory evening prayer alone, but when people are present it is easier for one and more lively. However, if he were not in hope of spiritual reward, he would not perform the prayer to be seen by others. Its similitude is that of the strong man who can raise a stone, but is helped by a weak man too, so that it becomes easier.

Each one of these has a different rule, as will be discussed in (the Part about) Sincerity (below). The purpose of this is that thou know that the meaning of intention is motivation, cause, and stimulus. Sometimes this is pure and sometimes mixed.

EXCURSUS: [WHY THE INTENTION OF THE BELIEVER IS BETTER THAN HIS DEED][1574]

Know that the Messenger (S) has said: "*The intention of the believer is better than his deed.*" The intention of the believer is better than his deed: he did not mean by this that an intention without the deed is better than a deed without the intention. For, this itself is not a secret, that a deed without the intention is not an act of worship, while an intention without the deed is an act of worship. Instead, the meaning is that one's devotion is with body and soul, and these are two parts. Of these two, that which is in the soul is better. The reason for this is that the aim of an act of the body (lasts) until the disposition of the soul changes. The aim of the intention and the act of the soul does not (just last) until the disposition of the body changes.

People imagine thus: that the intention is necessary for the deed, but the truth of the matter is that the deed must be for the intention. For the object of all is the moving about of the soul. It is the sojourner to the next world, and (eternal) happiness or misfortune will be its portion. Even though the body will be in view, it is but subservient, just as is the camel. For, although performing the Greater Pilgrimage cannot be accomplished without it, the camel is not the pilgrim. The turning about of the soul itself is not more than one thing: that it turn from this world to the Hereafter; rather, that it turn from this world and the Hereafter to God Most High. The direction of the soul does not precede its desire and inclination. When the desire for this world gains mastery over the soul, it turns to this world. Its attachment to this world is its desire and it was so at the beginning of creation. When the wishes of God Most High and of

[1574] From the AA text.

seeing the Hereafter dominate, its nature changes and it turns toward another direction.

Therefore, the aim of all deeds is the turning of the soul. The aim of prostration is not that the forehead turn in order to touch from the air to the ground. Rather, it is that the nature of the soul turns from passion[1575] and arrogance to humility. The purpose of (uttering) *God is Greater* is not that the tongue twist and flick about. Rather, it is that the nature of the soul should turn from glorification of the self to the glorification of God Most High. The purpose of casting stones during the Greater Pilgrimage is not to increase the number of stones at a particular spot or to exercise the arm. Rather, is that the soul stand firm upon its servitude (of God) and abandon the pursuit of appetite and the control of one's own intellect, and become obedient to (God's) command. He removes the reins from his own hand and surrenders them to the hand of (God's) command. As he says: "*At Thy service, in proof of Truth, in worship and as a slave.*" The purpose of the sacrifice is not that a sheep be killed. Rather, it is that the foulness of miserliness depart from thy breast. Thou dost not have compassion for animals because of thy nature, but thou hast it because of the command (of God). When it is said: "Slaughter this sheep!" thou dost not say: "What has this wretch done? Why should I punish it?" Rather, thou abandonest thy self and, in truth, become non-existent. For, the servant (of God) is non-existent with respect to himself and he is truly intoxicated with God. All acts of worship are like this.

However, the heart has been so created that when an inclination or desire appears in it, when the body rises in agreement with that, that quality becomes more firmly and strongly established in the heart. For example, when mercy for the orphan appears in the heart, if the hand is placed upon (the orphan's) head, that mercy grows stronger and the awareness of the heart increases. When the reality of humility appears, one acts humbly with the head too, and it approaches the ground.[1576] The intention of all acts of worship and the desire for the good is not that one turn to the world, but to the Hereafter.

Deeds (performed) with that intention become established and confirmed. Consequently, the deed is for the confirmation of the desire and the intention, even if it also comes from the intention. When it is so, it is obvious that intention is superior to the deed, for the intention itself is in the soul itself while the deed will flow from another place to the soul. If (the deed) does (this), it is useful, but if it does not, and it is done heedlessly, it is futile. The intention without the deed is this; it is not

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[1575] Note the play on the different meanings of the *hawā*: air and passion.

[1576] Ghazzali is referring to the lowering of the head to the ground in prostration (*sujūd*) in formal prayer.

futile. This is just as if there were a pain in the stomach. When one takes medicine and it reaches (the belly), the object is attained. If one smears it on the chest so that its effect reaches it, it is also beneficial, but it would be better if it reached the stomach directly. The object of that ointment which touches the chest is not the chest but the stomach. It will necessarily be futile if it does not spread to the stomach. That which reaches the stomach, even though it does not reach the chest, will not be futile.

Disclosing That Which May Be Forgiven of the Whisperings of the Self, Evil Inspiration, and Bad Thoughts; and That Which May Not Be Forgiven and for Which One Is Culpable

Know that the Messenger (S) said: "My people have been forgiven for whatever whisperings of the self there are"—and this is in both *Sahihs*.[1577] "The Most High King tells the angels not to record it (when) anyone intends to commit a sin but does not. If he does it, it is recorded as a one bad deed. If one intends to do a good deed and (something) good, one good deed is recorded, even though he does not do that good. If he does it, ten good deeds are recorded." In some Traditions, they are multiplied up to seven hundred. From this, some have imagined that one will not be culpable for every bad intention or thought. This is an error; we have shown that the main thing is the soul. The body is subservient to it. God Most High says: "Thou wilt be accountable for everything thou hast in thy heart, (whether) thou reveal it or conceal it." *And whether ye make known what is in your minds or hide it, God will bring you to account for it.* (Q. 2:284) And He says: "The eye, the ear, and the heart, all three will be queried." *Lo! The hearing and the sight and the heart—of each of these it will be asked.* (Q. 17:36) And He says: "They will not seize (you) for oaths in words on the tongue. They will seize (you) for what is intended in the heart. *God will not take you to task for that which is unintentional in your oaths; but He will take you to task for that which your hearts have garnered.* (Q. 2:225). It is not an offense for which they take (you) to task such as pride, hypocrisy, envy, and conceit. All of these are acts of the soul.

So, the truth which thou knowest in this section is that whatever occurs in the soul is of four kinds: Two are involuntary and one is not culpable for them. And, two are voluntary; there is culpability for them.

The parable of this is that one comes into danger as, for example, on a road where thou art walking and woman is following thee. If thou

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[1577] "both *Sahihs*": That is, both of collections of Traditions called *Saḥīḥ*, that of Bukhari and the other Muslim. Among Sunnis, these are the two most highly regarded collections of Traditions of the Prophet.

lookest back, thou wilt see her. This thought is called "the whispering of the self."

The second is that a desire be aroused in one's nature to look back. This is called "natural inclination."

The third is that (the desire) commands one's soul to look back. It commands this where there is no fear or shame to prevent it. For, it is not necessary for the soul to order everything be done which one's carnal appetite demands. Instead, it may say that it is not a proper thing to do. We call this "the judgment of the soul

The fourth is that one intends slightly and determines to look back. This determination quickly becomes resolution, if the one does not dismiss the decree of the heart because one is frightened by God Most High or by people, so that that decision is nullified.

Thus, one is not culpable for the first two states which we call "the promptings of the self" and "natural inclination," for they are not under one's control and God Most High says: *God tasks no soul beyond its capacity.* (Q. 2:286) These promptings are such that 'Uthman bin Maz'un[1578] said to the Messenger (S): "This self of mine says that I should castrate myself so as to be relieved of carnal appetites." (The Messenger) said: "Do not do that, for the castration of my people is fasting."[1579] ('Uthman) said: "This self of mine says that I should also not eat meat." (The Messenger) said: "No, for I love meat and if I were to obtain it, I would eat it, and if I were to ask for it, God Most High would give it (to me.)" ('Uthman) said: "This self of mine says that I should go a mountain as do the monks." (The Messenger) said: "Do not go, for the monkhood of my people is Pilgrimage and Defense of the Faith." Therefore, these thoughts that occurred to him are the promptings of the self, and they are forgiven, for he had not decided to obey them and he had consulted about them.

As for the two which are at one's choice, it is the judgment of the soul that it is should be done and it is the resolution of the soul to do it. One is culpable for both of these, even if one does not execute them because of shame, fear, or some other hindrance, but not for the sake of God Most High. The meaning of a servant (of God)'s culpability is not that anger comes to Him for a person and now he is punished in revenge,

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[1578] 'Uthmān bin Maẓ'ūn: a Companion of the Prophet, the fourteenth among them to accept Islam. He was one of those sent to Ethiopia to escape the Quraysh-led oppression in Makkah and was the first of the Muhajirs (emigrants from Makkah) to die in Madinah, the Prophet at his side.

[1579] A reference to the abstention from sexual intercourse during the hours of fasting. This remark was prompted by 'Uthman bin Maz'un's renunciation of sexual intercourse with his wife as an act of self-discipline, which the Prophet cautioned him against, pointing out hat his wife had rights too.

for the Divine Presence is beyond anger and revenge. Rather, it means that because of the intention that he had made, his soul has acquired a characteristic that causes it to fall more distant from the Divine Presence.

We have discussed this his wretchedness above, for his (spiritual) happiness lies in that he turn his face from the world toward God Most High, but his face is turned toward his desire. His affection is for that. Every desire and intention he makes related to the world strengthens his affection for the world, and he falls more distant from that which he needs. The meaning of his being culpable and accursed is that he becomes more involved (with the world) and more distance (from God). This is a matter that is by him, with him, and in him, too. However, there is neither delight at his devotion, nor is there anger at his sin so that He would take revenge upon him. However, such an interpretation is suitable for the people's intellect.

No doubt remains for whoever has mastered these mysteries that one is accountable for the states of the soul. The absolute proof of this is that the Messenger (S) said: "Two men draw their swords against each other and one is slain. The slain and the slayer are both in hell." They asked: "Indeed! Why the slain?" He said: "Because he had desired to slay the other if he had been able." Another (proof) is that he said: "A man has some wealth which he does not use wisely. Another says: 'If I had that, I would do the same.' Both are equal in that offense." This is nothing more than the intention of the soul. There is no doubt that if a person finds a woman in her nightclothes and lies with her on the supposition that she is an unknown woman, he becomes a sinner, even if she is (actually) his lawful wife. Moreover, if a person performs a formal prayer in a state of impurity thinking that he is in a state of purity, there is spiritual reward for him. But, if he thinks that he is in a state of impurity (when performing the prayer), he is a sinner, even if he remembers after completing the formal prayer that he had purified himself. All of these are conditions of the soul.

However, when a person intends to sin and then does not do so out of fear of God Most High, a good deed is recorded for him, as has been related in the Traditions. For, the intention was in agreement with (his) nature and refraining was a struggle in opposition to (his) nature, and the effect (of that abstention) in brightening the soul is greater than the effect of the intention in darkening it. The meaning of the recording of a good deed is this and the meaning of that Tradition is this. However, if one refrains because of inability and one has not atoned for it, that darkness does not fall away and one is culpable for it, just as the slain man who was unable to kill his opponent and was slain himself.

DISCLOSING THOSE DEEDS THAT CHANGE ACCORDING TO THE INTENTION

Know that there are three kinds of deeds: acts of devotion, sins, and the permitted.

(THE FIRST KIND: SINS.) It may be that because the Messenger (S) said: "*Verily deeds are according to intentions*," that a sin, with a good intention, can also be counted as an act of worship. This is an error. Rather, on this one kind, intention has no effect on it, but a bad intention makes it worse. It is like this: a person backbites in order to please the heart of someone; or he establishes a mosque, school, or retreat using unlawful wealth and says: "My intention is good." He does not know even this much: that it is not good because a resolution to do good with evil[1580] is another evil. If he understands all (of this), he is a sinner. If he does not know and imagines that this is good, he is also a sinner, for acquiring knowledge is a religious obligation. Most of mankind's perdition is from ignorance.

It is for this that Sahl Tustari said that there is no sin greater than ignorance; and ignorance with ignorance of the ignorance is greater because, if one does not know what he does not know, he will never learn and this becomes a veil and an impediment for him. In the same way, instructing a student—whose objective thou knowest to be the acquisition of wealth from judgeship, religious endowments, the property of orphans and the property of the ruler, the accumulation the (things of the) world, and the devotion of himself to contending for superiority and disputation—is unlawful.

If the teacher says: "My intention is to spread the knowledge of the Religious Law and (the student) uses in corruption, (and) *I* would be held culpable for my own (good) intention!" This is pure ignorance. It is like the person who gives someone a sword to commit brigandage, or gives or sells grapes to a person he knows will make wine from them. He says: "My intention was generosity, for no one is dearer to God Most High than the generous." This is out of his ignorance! Instead, if he knows that the man will commit brigandage, he should take the sword from his hand. How is it possible that it be lawful to give him another? Indeed, all of the forefathers took refuge with God Most High from the lewd scholar. They dismissed any student in whom they saw the effects of sin. Even Ahmad Hanbal dismissed a long-time student because he had seen that he had plastered the outside walls of his residence with mud plaster. He said: "Thou hast taken one fingernail from the highway of the Muslims. It is not proper to teach thee." Thus, a sin with a good

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[1580] "evil": the unlawfully acquired wealth.

intention does not become a good deed. Rather, the good is that which has been commanded (by God).

THE SECOND KIND: ACTS OF DEVOTION. In these, intention has two aspects with regard to effect: one is that its basis becomes correct with the intention; and the other is that however much the intention is increased, the spiritual reward is multiplied. Whoever acquires the knowledge (of making an) intention can make ten good intentions with one act of devotion, so that it becomes several[1581] acts of devotion. For example, when one goes into retreat in the mosque:

ONE DECLARES the intention that this is the house of God Most High. Whoever enters it, is as though he has come to visit God. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever enters the mosque has visited God Most High, and it is the right of the visitor to be honored by the visited."

THE SECOND is that one awaits the next formal obligatory prayer, and in the Traditions, it is related: "The one awaiting the (beginning of) formal prayer is in the formal prayer."[1582]

THE THIRD is that one makes the Intention so that with it the eyes, ears, hands, tongue, and feet cease movement. This is a species of fasting, for in the Traditions, it is related: "Sitting in the mosque is the monkhood of my people."

THE FOURTH is that one puts aside (worldly) works so that one gives the totality of his self to God Most High and busies himself with remembrance, meditation, and secret conversation.

THE FIFTH is that one finds safety from the mixing with people and their evil.

THE SIXTH is that if one sees some interdicted act in the mosque he forbids it. If one sees something (untoward), he commands (that it be stopped). If a person performs his prayer badly, he may instruct (him).

THE SEVENTH is that one may see some religious person and take him as a brother in faith, for the mosque is the resting place of the religious.

THE EIGHTH is that one is ashamed before God Most High to commit a sin in His house or entertain bad thoughts.

Make all acts of devotion analogous to this, for in each one many intentions can be made so that the spiritual reward becomes multiplied.

THE THIRD KIND IS THE PERMITTED,[1583] and let no rational being who wallows in the permitted like heedless beasts neglect a good

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[1581] "several," following AA's text. HK has "ten," but only eight are enumerated.

[1582] That is, the time one spends sitting in anticipation of the beginning of the formal prayer is considered part of the time spent in that devotion.

intention, for that is a great loss because he will be questioned about all of (these acts) and there will be a reckoning concerning all of the permitted things. He will be held accountable if his intention is bad. And, if it be good, it will redound to him. Otherwise, it will be quits. But he will have wasted time and spent it in that in which there is no benefit for him, and he will have disobeyed this verse: *And forget not thy portion of the world and be thou kind even as God has been kind to thee.* (Q. 28:77) That is, the world is transitory. Take thy portion from it so that it stays with thee.[1584] The Messenger (S) said: "The servant of God will be asked about all that he has done, even to the amount of collyrium applied about the eyes, or the bit of earth rubbed with between fingers, or the hand placed upon the clothing of a brother."

The study of the intention for the permissible things is lengthy, but it must be learned. An example is that using a pleasant scent is permissible and lawful when a person uses it on Friday (for the congregational prayer), (but) is not lawful when used with the purpose to display one's wealth or to deceive the people, or in the pursuit of gaining some place in the hearts of strange women with the intent of corruption. However, good intentions are those such as the aim of showing respect and homage to the house of God Most High; and with the intention of the comfort which touches his neighbors, so that they are put at ease and that his own unpleasant (body) odor be dispelled and not annoy them, lest they fall into the sin of backbiting.[1585] Or, he makes the intention to strengthen his resolve so as to purify it and increase its strength and to remember God Most High and to accustom himself to meditation and to be more able (to do so). These and the likes of these intentions occur to the person whose desire for good deeds dominates him, and from each one of these is a (divine) grace.

The servants of God among the forefathers were like that, for they desired that there be a good intention in every act of their eating, going to the lavatory, and lying (with their wives) so that not any one of these would be for no good reason. By making the purpose good, spiritual reward would come from it. Just as when they lie with their wives, they made their intention the siring of children and to increase the people of the Purified One (S);[1586] they declared the intention to comfort

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[1583] "Permitted" (*mubāhāt*): or, "optional," acts to which Islamic law is indifferent. Acts for which neither punishment nor spiritual reward may be expected. However, Ghazzali says that there will be some kind of account for these too.

[1584] "stay with thee": That is, "stay with thee to the Hereafter."

[1585] "backbiting" (*ghībat*): in this case, criticizing him in his absence because of offensive body odor. The custom of putting on a perfume or scent when going to the mosque, especially for the congregational prayer on Friday, is maintained to this day, especially in warm countries.

[1586] "the Purified One (S) (*Mustafā*): An epithet for the Prophet Muhammad (S).

the family[1587] to preserve them from sin and to preserve themselves from sin. Sufyan Thawri put on his clothes inside out. They told him about that. He raised his hand to change them, then stopped and left his clothes as they were, saying: "I have put these on (this way) for the sake of God Most High. I do not desire to change them not for the sake of God Most High." Zechariah (A) was working as a laborer some place; a group of people came to him. He was eating bread, but he did not ask them to eat. When he had finished eating, he said: "If I had not eaten all of the bread, I would have been left unequal to the task of (my employers') work and would not have finished it. I would have forgone a religious obligation for a popular custom."[1588]

Sufyan Thawri was eating when someone came to him. He did not say: "Eat" while he was eating. Then, he said: "If it were not for the fact that I had borrowed it, I would have invited thee to eat." And he said: "Whoever says to someone: 'Eat,' while he dislikes that in his heart, if that person does not eat, he has committed one sin and that is hypocrisy. If he eats, he has committed two sins: one is hypocrisy and the other is that he has committed treachery to that person by setting him to eat something which he would not eat if he knew the heart (of the person offering the food.)"

Disclosing That Choice in Which Intention Does Not Enter

Know that when a simple-hearted man hears that there is an intention possible for every permitted thing, it may happen that he say with his soul or his tongue: "I have formed the intention to marry for the sake of God Most High," or: "I eat bread for the sake of God Most High," or: "I recite my lessons and give lectures in assemblies for the sake of God Most High," and suppose that this is an Intention, while (instead), it is the speech of the tongue or the self. An Intention is an attraction and an inclination that appears in the soul, impelling that man to act, like an urge that importunes until one rises to answer it and act. This appears when motive appears and becomes dominant.

When there is no urge, the intention in words is like a sated person's saying: "I have formed the intention to be hungry," or when leaving a person, to say: "I have formed the intention to like him," and this is absurd. Just as a person who has an appetite for (sexual) intercourse says: "I have formed an intention to father a child." This is futile. When the motivation for the contract is the appetite, he says: "I

[1587] "the family": here, a euphemism for wives. That is, to satisfy lawfully the natural desires of the women.

[1588] That is, if he had shared his meal, he would not have been strong enough to fulfill his obligation to his employer. This obligation took precedence over the sharing of his meal that custom dictates.

have formed the intention to make the contract for the sake of the (Prophetic) Practice of the (Religious) Law." This is futile. Instead, first, faith in the Law must be strong, then he must reflect upon all that has come down in the Traditions about the spiritual reward of marriage for the purpose of procreation, so that the zeal for that spiritual reward quicken inside of him so as to impel him to marriage. This is the Intention itself, without its being articulated. For whoever is motivated to act by an eagerness for obedience (to God) to stand in formal prayer, this in itself is the Intention. (Just) uttering with the tongue: "I have formed the intention (to perform formal prayer)," is useless. Just as when a hungry person says: "I have formed the intention to eat because of my hunger." This is useless. For, when one is hungry, the eating itself is necessarily because of that (hunger). And wherever the enjoyment of the self appears, the intention for the Hereafter becomes difficult—unless the matter of the Hereafter has dominated all.

Therefore, the point of this is that thou know that intention for that is not in thy control. For, intention is a desire that causes one to act, and thine action is according to thy power so that if thou wantest to, thou doest it; and if thou dost not want to, thou dost not do it. However, thy desire is not in thy control so that if thou desirest, thou desirest, and if thou dost not desire, thou dost not desire. Moreover, there is the desire which is created and there is the desire which is not created. The cause of its appearance is that belief occurs to thee. Thy motive in this world or the next world is tied to some matter so that it may be that thou becomest desirous of it. A person who does not know these mysteries defers many acts of devotion because the intention is not present.

Ibn Sirin did not perform the formal (funerary) prayer at the bier of Hasan Basri. He said: "I do not find the intention." Sufyan Thawri was asked why he did not perform the formal prayer at the bier of Hammad bin Sulayman.[1589] He said: "If I had had the intention, I would have done so." Someone requested Tawus for a supplication. He said: "Be patient until the intention comes, then I shall supplicate (for thee)." When they would ask him to narrate Traditions, sometimes he would not do it and other times he would suddenly narrate a Tradition, saying: "I was waiting for the intention to appear." Someone said: "It has been a month that I have been trying to form a sound intention to visit such-and-such a sick person. It has not happened yet."

In sum, so long as the zeal for religion and the fear (of God and the Hereafter) do not master a person, intention will not come appear for any good deed. However, it may come—with effort also—in (the performance of) religious obligations. It may be that intention does not come until one thinks again about the fire of hell and frightens oneself

[1589] Hammād bin Sulaymān: A Traditionist mentioned by Ibn Qutaybah in *Al-Ma'arif*.

with that. When a person understands these truths, a person may leave off virtues and resort to the permissible (but religiously indifferent). The intention for these permitted things is like that of a person who finds an intention for retaliation, but not for forgiveness.[1590] With respect to him, retaliation is superior. And, it may happened that the intention for the night formal prayer not come, but one receive the intention to sleep so that one may arise in the morning at dawn. For him sleep was better. Moreover, if one becomes weary of worship and knows that if he spends an hour in recreation with his family or in conversation and pleasant talk with some person, his zeal will return, this enjoyment is superior for him than the intention to worship wearily.

Abu Darda (R) says: "I let myself play and relax from time to time so that the zeal for God Most High may return." 'Ali (R) says: "If thou keepest the soul continually in loathing, it will become blind." This is as though a physician gives meat to a sick person—even though it is of a hot temperament[1591]—to restore his strength in order to have the strength (to endure) the medicine. Or, a person flees from the ranks in a battle so that the enemy will pursue him. Then, suddenly he turns and strikes back at him. Fighters use many such tricks. The way of religion is all battle and debate with oneself and with Satan, and it comes to need (both) kindness and cunning. This is sanctioned by the great of religion, even though the deficient scholars do not know the path to that.

Excursus: [Whatever the Admirable Servant of God Does, He Does for the Sake of God][1592]

Now that thou hast learned that the meaning of intention is motivation for action, know that there is the person whose motivation for devotion is the fear of hell. There is the person whose motivation is the blessings of Paradise. Whoever acts for the sake of Paradise is the slave of his belly and his genitalia and is killing himself so that he will fall in a place where he will satisfy his belly and his genitalia. And he who acts out of fear of hell is like the bad slave who does not work except out of fear of his master. Both of these have nothing to do with God Most High.

[1590] "retaliation" (*qiṣāṣ*): the law of retaliation: a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, etc. It may be invoked for loss of life or bodily injury or commuted to payment to the victim's relatives in the case of death, or to the victim himself in case of injury. The forgiveness mentioned is the commutation to monetary payment, or outright forgiveness. In this illustration, the person cannot find the intention in his heart to commute what is due, but can find the intention to exact the full penalty for the wrong.

[1591] A reference to the theory of hot and cold foods. Hot foods should not be given to persons suffering from certain ailments. In this case, the hot food, since it is strengthening, is given to the patient to enable him to endure the medicine, just as today patients are often strengthened before undergoing operations.

[1592] From the AA text.

On the contrary, the admirable servant of God is he who does what he does for the sake of God Most High, not in the hope of Paradise, or in the fear of hell. He is like the person who looks upon his beloved for the sake of the beloved, not because his beloved gives him silver and gold; for whoever looks for the sake of silver and gold, his beloved is silver and gold. Consequently, whoever's beloved and adored one is not the beauty and majesty of the Divine Presence cannot form such an intention.

The worship of that person who has become thus is all meditation upon the beauty of God and conversation with Him. If he performs an act of devotion with his body, it is because he loves to carry out the command of (his) Beloved. Then he desires to also discipline the body in servitude and he serves that Presence, as much as he is able, lest his soul be restrained from the contemplation of that Beauty. If he refrains from sinning, he does so because he knows that following his carnal appetites veils him from the pleasure of witnessing and conservation with God Most High. The spiritually cognizant one is truly he.

Ahmad Khadruwiyah[1593] saw God in a dream Who said: "All people seek something from Me except Abu Yazid who seeks Me." Shibli, may God have mercy upon him, was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God Most High done with you?" He answered: "He criticized me because one time these words flowed from my tongue: 'What loss is greater than this, that Paradise be lost?' He said: 'Nay, what loss is greater than that seeing Me be lost!'" The true nature of this love and this pleasure will be discussed in the Chapter on Love,[1594] *if God Most High wills it.*

Part Two: Concerning Sincerity, Virtue, and Truth, and Their Degrees

As for the virtue of sincerity, since thou knowest that God Most High said: *And they were ordered naught other than to serve God, sincere to Him in religion.* (Q. 98:5) And He, may He glorified and exalted, said: *Surely, pure religion is for God only.* (Q. 39:3) He said:

[1593] Ahmad Khadruwiyah: Abū Ḥāmid Aḥmad bin Khaḍruwīyah al-Balkhī. A soldier, he married Fatimah, the daughter of the Amir of Balkh. She was already renowned as a Sufi. She accompanied Ahmad on a visit to Bayazid during which she removed her veil. This angered Ahmad, but this remarkable woman replied that while he was her natural spouse, Bayazid was her religious consort. They settled in Nishabur. Ahmad wrote well-regarded treatises on ethics and mysticism. Among his sayings: "Hide the glory of poverty." His association with Bayazid places him in the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century. (Hujwiri)

[1594] Chapter Nine of this Pillar.

"The people have not been commanded except to worship with sincerity, and sincere religion is for God Most High alone." The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High says: 'Sincerity[1595] is one of My mysteries. I have placed it in the soul of the servant whom I love." And the Messenger (S) said to Mu'adh: "Act with sincerity so that a little will suffice." Everything that we have mentioned concerning the censure of hypocrisy also concerns sincerity, for the opinion of the people is one of the causes for the cutting off of sincerity, and there are other causes also.

Ma'ruf Karkhi, may God have mercy upon him, used to scourge himself with a whip, saying: "*O self! Be sincere in order to find salvation!*" Act sincerely in order to attain deliverance.[1596] Abu Sulayman[1597] says: "Blessed is that person during whose life (at least) a single step is correct in sincerity, so that in it he may have desired (nothing) other than God Most High." Abu Ayyub Sijistani[1598] says: "Sincerity in intention is more difficult than the basis of the intention." Someone was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God Most High done with thee?" He answered: "All that I had done for His sake, I saw in the scale pan of good deeds, even a pomegranate seed that I had picked up from a road and even a cat that had died in my house. And I saw a thread of silk that I had tied to my cap in the pan of my bad deeds. There had been a donkey that had died that I did not see in the pan of good deeds. I said: 'O glory be to God! The cat was among my good deeds, but not the donkey.' He said: 'That which thou hast sent from there has come there. When thou heardst (the donkey) had died, thou saidst: "*(Nothing) except the curse of God.*" If thou hadst said: "*In the way of God,*" thou wouldst have received (the spiritual reward).' I had given in charity for the sake of God, but people were watching and looking; their watching also pleased me. That was neither to my credit, nor to my

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[1595] "sincerity" (*ikhlāṣ*): It should be pointed out that the Arabic word *ikhlāṣ* can also mean "purity, liberation, candor, loyalty," etc.

[1596] AA and HK differ on the exact wording of this saying of Ma'ruf Kharki and Ghazzali's paraphrase of it. They vowel the Arabic differently: *yā nafsi, akhliṣi takhlaṣi* (*takhlaṣi*—a form that does not occur in standard Arabic—is probably a misprint for *takhlusī*) (HK); *yā nafsu, ukhluṣ takhallusī* (AA) They would mean, respectively: "O my self, be faithful (in order) to be liberated/saved" (HK); and "O self, be pure/liberated (in order) to be my deliverance." Ghazzali's paraphrase also differs in each text: *khalāṣ kun tā khalāṣ yābī* (HK) and *ikhlāṣ kun tā khalāṣ yābī* (AA); meaning, respectively: "Set it free/leave it alone in order to find deliverance" (HK), and "Act sincerely in order to find deliverance" (AA). The choice of words in the translation of this passage has been made with attention to the context.

[1597] Abu Sulayman: Probably Abu Sulayman Darani, see Note 574.

[1598] Abū Ayyūb Sijistānī: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

detriment." [1599] Sufyan Thawri commented: "He[1600] obtained a large fortune because it was not to his detriment." [1601]

Someone says: "I was going by sea to fight in defense of the faith. One of my friends was selling a feed bag.[1602] I said (to myself): 'I ought to buy it, use it, and then sell it in such-and-such a city at a profit.' That night, I dreamt that two persons were descending from the heavens. One was saying to the other: 'Write the names of the defenders of the faith and write that so-and-so has come to do business, and so-and-so has come to see the sights, and so-and-so has come hypocritically.' Then he looked at me and said: 'Write that so-and-so has come to do business.' I cried: 'God! God! Look at my affair! I have nothing! How can I have come to do business? I have come for the sake of God Most High.' He said: 'O shaykh! Didst thou not buy that feed bag in order to profit by it?' I wept. I said: 'God! God! I am not a businessman.' (The angel) said to the other: 'Write that so-and-so had come to fight in defense of the faith. On the way, he bought a feed bag in order to make a profit. Let God Most High give His decree concerning him as He wills.'"

From this, it has been said that in the sincerity of an hour lies the salvation of eternity. However, (unalloyed) sincerity is rare. It has been said that faith is the seed; the deed, the cultivation; and its (irrigating) water is sincerity.

There was a devotee among the Children of Israel. He was told that in such-and-such a place there is a tree where it was worshipped by a people and taken it as a god. He became angry and rose up. He placed an axe upon his shoulder in order to cut down that tree. Iblis, in the form of an old man, came before him on the road and asked: "Where art thou going?" He answered: "I am going to cut that tree down." (Iblis) said: "Do not go. Occupy thyself with worship, for that is better for thee than doing that." (The devotee) said: "This is my act of worship." (Iblis) declared: "I shall not allow it!" and he began to fight with him. The devotee threw (Iblis) on the ground and sat upon his chest. Iblis cried: "Desist, so that I may tell thee something. If it does not meet with thine approval, then do what thou willest." (The devotee) let go of him. He said: "O devotee, thou art a poor man and the people provide for thee. If thou hast something thou canst utilize and provide for other devotees, it

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[1599] Literally, "that also was for myself and not upon me": It did not benefit me nor did it cause me loss; that is, an act with neither religious merit nor detriment.

[1600] "He" following AA's text. HK makes the subject of the sentence "a young man" (*jawānī*), which seems less appropriate here.

[1601] That is, the narrator of the preceding story was fortunate that he was not considered guilty of flaunting his charity.

[1602] The feed bag tied to the noses of beasts of burden, especially horses, mules, and donkeys containing grain or fodder for them to eat. It is a trivial item, but the point of the story is, of course, that even trivialities can seriously corrupt intention.

would be better for thee than cutting down that tree. They will plant another and will not lose anything by it. Desist, so that every day I shall put two dinars under thy pillow." The devotee thought this over and said: "Thou art right. It would be better if I gave one dinar in charity and spent the other than if I cut down that tree. I have not been commanded to do that, nor am I a prophet so that I would be duty-bound to do so." So, in this opinion, he returned. The next morning, he saw the two dinars. He took them. The next day, he found another two dinars. He took them. He said: "It is good that I did not cut down that tree." On the third day, he found nothing. He became angry, picked up the axe, and went out. Iblis came to him and said: "How far art thou going?" (The devotee) answered: "To cut down that tree." (Iblis) said: "Thou art lying! Thou wilt never be able to cut down that tree." They began to fight and (Iblis) overthrew the devotee as though he were a sparrow in the hand (of Iblis). He said: "Go back home! If thou dost not, I shall cut thy head off right now like that of a sheep!" (The devotee) said: "Desist, for I am going back. But tell me the truth: How is it that the other time I was superior and this time thou." (Iblis) answered: "Because at that time, thou wert angry for the sake of God Most High, and He made me subservient to thee. I cannot compete with anyone who does something for the sake of God Most High. However, this time thine anger was for thyself and for the money. We are stronger than anyone who pursues his own passions."

The True Nature of Sincerity

Know that as thou hast come to know intention, which is the motivation in one's action and its importuner, if that importuner is one, it is called sincerity (or purity). If there are two importuners, it is "mixed" and not pure. "Mixed," for example, is like this: One is fasting for the sake of God Most High, but there is also the aim for good health. Or, it is also for the purpose of reducing the consumption of provisions. Or, so as not to take the trouble to cook and prepare food. Or, one has something to do so that one does not fall asleep and will be able to do the work. Or, one frees a slave so as to be relieved of the expenditure for him, or to escape (the slave's) bad nature. Or, one performs the Greater Pilgrimage so that one become strong and healthy from the trip, or to tour and see (different) lands, or to get rest from one's wife and children and their troubles for a few days, or to escape the problems (caused by) an enemy. Or, to perform formal prayer at night so as not to fall asleep and be able to watch one's goods.

Or, to acquire knowledge so as to be able to earn one's keep or to be able to preserve one's own goods and property, or to be valued and honored, or to teach and lecture at gatherings to escape the sorrow of

silence and not be lonely. Or, to copy the Book[1603] so that one's handwriting may become good and straight. Or, to go on Pilgrimage on foot so as to save the cost of hire. Or, to purify oneself in order to be blessed and clean, or to perform the Greater Ablution in order to have a pleasant (body) scent. Or, to seclude oneself in the mosque so that one will not have to pay house rent. Or, to give charity to a beggar so as to be relieved of his importunity and insistence, or to give something to the poor because one is ashamed to withhold it. Or, to visit the sick so that should he himself become sick, they will visit him, or so the sick person not complain about him and take offense, or to do some good deed for one of these, so that he be known for righteousness. This is hypocrisy and we have discussed the verdict about hypocrisy.

However, all of these thoughts nullify sincerity, whether it be to a smaller or greater extent. Rather, (sincerity) is pure when there is absolutely no portion in it for oneself. Instead, it is purely for the sake of God Most High. As when the Messenger (S) was asked what sincerity was, he said: "That thou say: *My Lord God! Then thou becomest correct as thou hast been commanded.*" "Thou sayest: 'O God,' then, thou takest the straight path as has been commanded."

And, so long as a person is not liberated from the traits of human nature, this is extremely hard. Concerning this, it has been said that nothing is harder or more difficult than pure sincerity, and if in a lifetime one step is correct in sincerity, there is hope for salvation. In reality, extracting a pure and sincere act from among the motives and traits of human nature is like extracting milk from intestinal feces or from blood. As He said: *From betwixt the refuse and the blood, pure milk palatable to the drinkers.* (Q. 16:66)[1604] Therefore, the remedy for this is that, first, one cuts the ties to the world and that the love for God Most High becomes supreme, so that one becomes like a lover whose every desire he desires is for the sake of his beloved. If this person eats food and goes to the privy, for example, it is possible that there can be sincerity in that. He who is mastered by his love for the world can be sincere in formal prayer and fasting (only) with difficulty, because all acts take on the character of the soul and incline to that side to which the soul inclines. The deeds of whoever is dominated by his love for rank are directed at people so that when he washes his face in the morning and dons his clothing, it is all for the sake of the people.

[1603] That is, the Quran.

[1604] The complete verse is: *And lo! In the cattle, there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies, from betwixt the refuse and the blood, pure milk palatable to the drinkers.* (Q. 16:66) The separation of milk from blood and the contents of the intestines in the human (and animal) body is a sign of the handiwork of God, and a metaphor for the spiritual sustenance which God gives mankind.

Pure sincerity is in no act more difficult than in holding assemblies, teaching, the narration of Traditions, and that which is directed at people; for, usually the motivation is popularity,[1605] or is mixed with that. So, the object becomes popularity when the object should be being procuring the proximity (of God), either stronger or weaker. However, most of the religious scholars are incapable of keeping their souls pure from these considerations, except the fools who suppose that they are sincere and are deceived by that; they do not recognize their own defects. Indeed, many of the astute are incapable of this.

One of the saints says: "I made up the formal prayers of thirty years, all of which I had performed in the first rank, because one day I arrived late and stayed in the last rank. In my heart, I found that I was ashamed before the people who would say that I had arrived late. I understood (then) that my delight had all been from being seen by the people in the front rank." Therefore, (pure) sincerity is that which is hard to comprehend theoretically, and practicing it is even harder. Anything that is shared and insincere is not acceptable.

Excursus: [Fraud In Worship Has Four degrees][1606]

Know that the great have said that the two bows of formal prayer of a learned person are superior to one year's worship of the ignorant person, because the ignorant person does not understand the detriments of an act. He does not know about the mixing of it with (other) motives and he imagines everything is purely sincere. Fraud in worship is just like fraud in gold. There is some gold at which whoever looks supposes to be gold and it even deceives a moneychanger, except for the master moneychanger. But, the ignorant suppose everything to be gold which looks like gold, and is not gold.

Fraud in worship that cuts off sincerity has four degrees, some more hidden and obscure. We record them as hypocrisy in order to expose them:

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is that when a servant of God is performing a formal prayer and people come, Satan says: "Do it better lest they criticize thee." This is itself obvious.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one knows this and avoids it. Satan says: "Do it better so that they will follow thee and thou mayst have the spiritual reward of their following thee." It may happen that he falls for this deceit and does not know that the spiritual reward of being followed is at the time that the light of his humility spreads to others. However,

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[1605] Literally: "acceptance by the people" (*qabūl-i khalq*).
[1606] From the AA text.

since he was not humble, but that is the opinion of others, the spiritual reward is theirs, and he will be held culpable for his own hypocrisy.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one knows that performing formal prayer in private different from (one's formal prayer) in public is the essence of hypocrisy. One makes the decision to pray well in private so as to be able to do it as he does in public. This is more obscure, but it is also hypocrisy. However, one does this dissembling and hypocrisy to oneself, because one is ashamed of oneself that one's private praying should be different from when (he is) in the congregation. Because one prays well in public, one does the same in private and supposes that he has escaped the public hypocrisy, whereas in reality it he has also become a hypocrite in private.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is the most obscure: that one not know that the humility in private or public for the sake of people serves no purpose. Satan says to him: "Think again about the greatness of God Most High. Look! Dost thou not know where thou art standing?" Therefore, he thinks again and becomes humble and becomes adorned in the eyes of the people. If it is thus, that in private such thoughts do not customarily appear in one's heart, the reason for this (act) is hypocrisy. However, by this trick, Satan has presented it to him so that it remains veiled. Since one remembers the greatness of God Most High when one sees people, it is useless. On the contrary, being seen by the people and being seen by beasts of burden should be the same to him. If he finds a difference, he is not yet devoid of hypocrisy. We have spoken of this example in (the chapter) concerning hypocrisy.[1607]

Concerning other motivations that we have discussed before this, there is much deception in the same way. Whoever does not understand these niceties keeps himself in sorrow and strives hard in vain and that which he does is all lost. It is with regard to this that God Most High said: *And the evils that they earned will appear unto them, and that whereat they used to scoff will surround them.* (Q. 39:47)

EXCURSUS: [A COMPOSITE INTENTION IS NOT DEVOID OF SPIRITUAL REWARD][1608]

Know that when an intention has become composite, if the intention for hypocrisy or some other motive be more dominant than the intention for worship, this will be a cause of punishment. If they are equal, it will be the cause neither of punishment nor of spiritual reward. If it be weaker, the act will not be devoid of spiritual reward. However much the Traditions indicate that when there is a sharing (of the object of

[1607] Third Pillar, Chapter Eight.
[1608] From the AA text.

the act of worship), it is said: "Go and seek thy reward for that from the person for whom thou hast done it!" but it is obvious to us that it is intended by (saying) that, that both aims be equal. Therefore, there is no reward when one seeks it and it is said: "Seek it from that person." At that place where the Tradition is the evidence of punishment, the intention is that all (of the deed) be for the purpose of hypocrisy, or that it be the dominant (motive). However, when the main motivation be the procurement of (divine) favor and the other (motive) be weak, (the act) should not be without spiritual reward, even if the spiritual reward does not achieve the degree of that which is purely sincere. We make this choice for two reasons:

ONE (REASON) is that it has become known to us with proof that the meaning of punishment is the distancing of the soul from suitability for the Divine Presence. The reason for this is that the veil is burned by fire. The aim for proximity is the seed of (spiritual) happiness, while the aim of hypocrisy is the seed of hardship. Compliance with these two aims is aiding them. One distances one (from God) and the other draws him closer. When they are equal, one turns a handbreadth farther and the other a handbreadth nearer, then they return to their former positions. If it becomes half a handbreadth closer, loss and distancing are obtained. If it becomes half a handbreadth farther, the nearness remains; as when a sick person eats a hot food and eats an equal amount of cold food, they become equal. If he eats less (of the cold), the hotness increases somewhat. If it increases, something of the hotness is decreased. The effect of sinning and devotion on the illumination and darkness of the soul is like the effect of medications upon the condition of the body. One atom of that will not be lost. Its preponderance or deficiency will be determined in the scales of justice. This is: *And whoever has done an atom's weight of good will see it.* (Q. 99:7) However, discretion is caution in that, for it may be that delight is the stronger motive, but one supposes it to be the weaker. The way of safety is that one close off the way of private motive.

The other reason is that there is a consensus that if a person transacts business on the way to perform the Greater Pilgrimage, no loss to his Pilgrimage is incurred, even though its spiritual reward is not like the spiritual reward of the (purely) sincere. However, since his main purpose is the performance of the Greater Pilgrimage and the business is secondary, on the whole, its spiritual reward is not lost to him, even though there may be some decrease. A person goes to fight in defense of the faith for the sake of God Most High, but one may go to fight in (either of) two regions. In one region, they are the rich and there will be much booty, in the other region, they are the poor. He goes to fight in the

region of the rich.[1609] He should not lose his spiritual reward completely, for a man is not devoid of that in himself which distinguishes between obtaining and not obtaining booty. *God save us*, if this were a condition, there is the fear of obtaining spiritual reward, for no deed would be correct—especially lectures, teaching, writing, and that which is directed towards the people. So long as a person does not receive everything of himself directly from that, it will not be devoid, for example, of (the possibility) that his writing be ascribed to another, or his words attributed to another who has learned of them, even though one may be displeased by that information.

Part Three: Concerning Truthfulness

Know that truthfulness[1610] is close to sincerity and its degree is great. Whoever achieves the perfection of truth is called "truly righteous."[1611] God Most High praises this person in the Quran: ... *men who are true to that which they have covenanted with God.* (Q. 33:23) And He said: *That He may question the truthful of their truthfulness.* (Q. 33:8) The Messenger (S) was asked: "In what does perfection lie?" He replied: "Speaking the truth and acting in sincerity." As a result, knowing the meaning of *ṣidq* is important, and the meaning of *ṣidq* is "truth." This veracity and truth[1612] lie in six things; whoever achieves perfection in all of them is a witness of truthfulness:

THE FIRST TRUTHFULNESS is that of the tongue, that one utter no lies in what he reports about his past and present, or a promise one gives about the future. We have noted before that the soul acquires the character of the tongue and a distorted soul comes from crooked speech, while it becomes straight from a truthful tongue. The perfection of this truth is with two things:

ONE (PERFECTION) is that one does not speak in parables so that, though one speaks the truth, a person understands something else. However, there is the situation when speaking the truth is not advisable, such as during war, between a man a woman,[1613] and in making peace

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[1609] He goes there because there is the prospect of greater booty.

[1610] "veracity" (*sidq*): A word of Arabic origin meaning "truth, veracity, sincerity, candor," etc.

[1611] "truly righteous" (*ṣiddīq*): or, "faithful witness of the truth."

[1612] The Arabic *ṣidq* and the Persian *rāstī* are virtually synonymous. I use "veracity" for the former and "truth" for the latter merely to distinguish them in this passage. A parallel construction, giving a word in both Arabic and Persian, much favored in Persian literature, as is the same device in English of pairing words of Anglo-Saxon and Latin or French origin. There is an exact parallel here, for "veracity" is of Latin origin, while "truth" is from Old (Anglo-Saxon) English.

[1613] "a man a woman" (*mard wa zan*): or "a husband and wife."

between people; there is permission to lie (in those situations). But the perfection of this is that in such a situation, one speak in allusions and as much as possible not utter explicit lies. If one does so, since he is sincere in his purpose and intention and he speaks for the sake of God Most High and for the welfare of the people, he does not fall from the degree of truth.

THE SECOND PERFECTION is that one seek truth from oneself in conversation with God Most High. When one says: "*I have turned my face*," while one's soul is facing the world, he has uttered a lie and has not turned his face to God Most High. When he says: "*Thee do I worship*," which means that I am Thy servant and that I worship Thee—but then he is tied to the world or tied to carnal passions, he is not under His control. Rather, he is controlled by his passions, and he has uttered a lie, for he is their servant and bound to them. Concerning this, the Messenger (S) said: "*Wretched is the slave of the dirham and the dinar.*" He called him a slave of gold and silver. Indeed, so long as the entire world does not achieve freedom, he shall not become a servant of God. The fullness of this liberty and freedom is that one become free from oneself, too, just as one is free from mankind so that no volition remain to one. Instead, one desires nothing other than God Most High and one is content with that which He does with one. This is the fullness of truth in being (God's) servant. A person who does not have this cannot be called truly righteous either.

THE SECOND TRUTHFULNESS is with the intention that one not desire anything which procures favor, except that of God Most High; nor does one admix anything with that. This is pure sincerity, and sincerity is also called truth. Whoever harbors any thought in his conscience other than seeking His favor is a liar in the worship that he displays.

THE THIRD TRUTHFULNESS is resolution: that a person resolve that if he had governmental authority, he would be just; if he had wealth, he would give all of it away in charity. If someone should appear who would be superior to him in governance, lecturing, or teaching, he would surrender (his post) to him. Sometimes this resolve is strong and decisive in him, at other times it is weak and hesitating. That which is unhesitatingly strong is called "resolute truthfulness," as when it is said: "This appetite is a liar," that is, it has no root; and: "It is truthful" when it is strong. The witness of truthfulness is he who always finds his resolution for good deeds at maximum strength, as 'Umar (R) said: "I would prefer to be taken and have my head struck off to being the commander of a people among whom is Abu Bakr."[1614] He had found the

[1614] That is, 'Umar did not consider himself worthy to give orders to Abu Bakr.

strong resolve in himself to endure having his head struck off. There is the person who, if given the choice between being killed himself and the killing of Abu Bakr, would prefer his own life. There is a great difference between that and him who would prefer his own death to being in command of Abu Bakr.

THE FOURTH TRUTHFULNESS is in faithfulness to one's resolve; for, it may happen that one's resolve be strong in risking one's life in battle or in surrendering one's position to a better in government, but when the time comes (to act), the self does not obey. Concerning this, God Most High said: *...men who are true to that which they have covenanted with God.* (Q. 33:23) That is, they are faithful to their own resolve and they sacrifice themselves. Regarding some folk who had resolved to give of their wealth, but were not faithful (to their word), He said thus: *And of them is he who made a covenant with God (saying): If He give us of His bounty, We shall give alms and become of the righteous. Yet, when He gave them of His bounty, they hoarded it and turned away, averse.* (Q. 9:75-76) to where He said: *because they lied*; (Q. 9:77)[1615] until He called them liars in their covenant and promise.

THE FIFTH TRUTHFULNESS is that one not do any act that is not of the nature of one's inner character. For example, if a person walks slowly on the road (in a dignified manner) while inside him, there is no dignity; he is not truthful. That truthfulness comes from the concordance of the inner self and the public, and that is appropriate for a person whose essence and inner self is better than his exterior, or is the same as his exterior. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "O Lord God! Make my inner self better than (my) public self, and make my public self good." Whoever does not have this quality, in which the exterior reflects the interior, is a liar and falls away from truthfulness, even though his aim is not dissimulation.

THE SIXTH TRUTHFULNESS is that one seek the true nature of oneself in the stations of religion, such as asceticism, love, reliance, fear, hope, contentment, and enthusiasm, and not be satisfied with their explanation and appearances. For, no believer is completely devoid of these states though they may be weak. Whoever is strong in these is truthful in them. As He said: *The (true) believers are those only who*

[1615] The full text of the passage is: *And of them is he who made a covenant with God (saying): If He give us of His bounty, We shall give alms and become of the righteous. Yet, when He gave them of His bounty, they hoarded it and turned away, averse. So He hath made the consequence (to be) hypocrisy in their hearts until the Day when they shall meet Him, because they broke their word to God that they had promised Him, and because they lied.* (Q. 9:75-77)

believe in God and His messenger and afterward doubt not, but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of God. Such are the truthful. (Q. 49:15) Therefore, whosoever's faith is complete is called "truthful." They are like the person who is afraid of something. The sign of this is that he trembles and his face turns pale; he cannot eat or drink and he is anxious. If a person fears God Most High in this way, it is said that this fear is genuine. However if one says: "I fear sinning," but does not stop (sinning), he is called "liar." In all the stations, there are many such distinctions.

So, whoever is truthful in all six of these meanings, and then it is at perfection (in them), is called "truly righteous." Persons who are truthful in (only) some of these are not called truly righteous, although their degree is according to their truthfulness.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCERNING RECKONING AND GUARDING

Know that God Most High says: "We shall place the scales on the Day of Resurrection and We shall not be unjust to any person. We shall bring forward whoever has done a *mithqal*[1616] of a grain of good or evil and place it in the scales and We shall requite the account of the people and We are Sufficient": *And We set a just balance for the Day of Resurrection so that no soul is wronged in aught. Though it be of the weight of grain of mustard seed, We bring it. And We suffice for reckoners.* (Q. 21:47) Then, after He had given this promise, He commanded mankind to examine their accounts in this world, saying: *And let every soul look to that which it sendeth on before for the morrow and observe your duty to God; Lo! God is Aware of what ye do.* (Q. 59:18) And in the Traditions, it is related: "The wise person is he who has four hours: [1617] an hour for reckoning his own account, an hour for conversation with God Most High; an hour to arrange for one's sustenance; and an hour to rest from that which has been done of the lawful in the world." 'Umar (R) said: "*Make your accounts with yourselves before ye are held to account.*" Make your own accounts before the accounts are placed before you. God Most High says: *O ye who believe! Be patient,*—be ye patient—*and vie with each other in patience*—struggle well against your selves and your passions—*and be steadfast!*—be steadfast in this religious struggle.[1618] (Q. 3:200)

So, the wise and the great ones of religion have realized that they have come into this world to engage in business, and the transactions are with the self. The profit or loss of these transactions is heaven and hell; rather, it is eternal happiness and misery. Therefore, one's self is put in the position of a business partner. Just as with a partner, conditions are made. Then, he is watched, and then he is audited. If he has been treacherous, he will be punished or reproved. So, (the wise and the saints), too, have stood with their selves in these six stations: fixing mutual conditions, vigilance, reckoning, punishment, striving, and reproof.[1619]

[1616] one *mithqāl*: about 5 grams.

[1617] "hours" (*sāᶜāt*): The conventional 60-minute hour is not meant here: rather, an indefinite period of time is intended. We would probably say "some time during the day."

[1618] "religious struggle": *jihād*. Ghazzali's use of the word *jihād* here illustrates its comprehensive nature. He is referring to the struggle against the self, one of the many aspects of *jihād*, the effort to provide and protect the spiritual context of Islam. Armed conflict in defence of Islam is but another of them.

[1619] The names of all of these six forms imply reciprocity. In Perso-Arabic they are, respectively: *mushāraṭat*, *murāqabat*, *muḥāsabat*, *muᶜāqabat*, *mujāhadat*, and *muᶜātabat*.

THE FIRST STATION: CONCERNING THE FIXING OF MUTUAL CONDITIONS

Know that the partner who gives wealth is an aide in the obtaining of profit, but it may happen that he becomes an adversary when he desires to do some treachery. So, one must first stipulate the conditions with a partner and then remain vigilant with him continually. Then one must bargain[1620] in the reckoning. The self takes precedence in this, for the profit of that transaction is eternal, while the profit of a worldly transaction is but for a few days. Whatever does not last is, in the view of the wise, worthless; so that it has been said that an evil that lasts is better than a good that does not last. Since every breath of the breaths of one's life is a precious jewel by which one may lay up treasure, reckoning and bargaining with respect to it is better

Therefore, the intelligent one is he who empties his soul of this affair for an hour after the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer and tells this matter to his self:[1621] "I have no goods other than life, and each breath that passes cannot be made up, for the breaths are numbered in the knowledge of God Most High and will certainly not be added to. When life has passed, it cannot be regained. The work is now; for, time is short, while in the Hereafter, time is vast, but there is no work.[1622] Today is thy day which God Most High has given to thee as life. If death comes upon thee, thou wilt yearn to be given a single day's respite to rectify thine affairs.

"Now, He has given thee that respite. Beware, O self! Do not waste that capital which thou possessest lest tomorrow there not be even a moment and nothing will remain save regret. Suppose thus today: that thou hast died and have begged that thou be given one more day's respite, and that that respite has been given! What is more harmful than that thou waste time and not obtain (spiritual) happiness from it?"

And in the Traditions, it is related: "Tomorrow, for every day and night which has twenty-four hours, twenty-four repositories will be placed before the servant of God. The door of one will be opened. He sees it full of the light of the good deeds that have been performed during that hour. From that, such joy, tranquillity, and glee reach his soul that if it were divided among all of the inhabitants of hell, they would become

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[1620] "bargain" (*mikās*): or bidding. The Arabic root also refers to collecting taxes, but "bargain" seems more appropriate in this context.

[1621] "he who empties his soul after the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer and tells this matter to his self": thus, following HK. AA has: "he who empties his soul for an hour after the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer and tells his soul..."

[1622] By "work" in this sentence, Ghazzali is referring to the work of laying up provisions for the Hereafter. Though the Hereafter is eternal, there will be no opportunity for laying up provisions for it. That must be accomplished while sojourning upon the earth in this life.

unaware of its fire. That joy is because he knows that those lights will be the means of his acceptance by God Most High. The door of another repository is opened. He sees blackness and darkness and smells a great stench from which all the people of the Resurrection hold their noses. That is the time of sinning. Such terror, shame, and confusion will reach his soul that if they were divided among all the inhabitants of heaven, the blessings of heaven would become loathsome. Another door is opened: it is neither dark nor bright. That is the time that he wasted from his life. Such a regret and a feeling of being defrauded will come upon his soul, like that of a person who had power over a great kingdom and a vast treasure and who gave it up in prodigality so that (all) was lost. And every hour of his life, one by one, will be displayed to him in the same manner."

So, one says to one's self (after the morning prayer): "O self, like that, twenty-four hours have been placed before thee today. Beware! Leave no moment unoccupied, for thou shalt not be able to endure the regret for (it's loss)." The great have said: "Suppose that thou are forgiven;[1623] will not the degree and spiritual reward of the doers of good be lost, leaving thee in the regret for that?"

Therefore, one must entrust all of one's members to (thy self) and say: "Beware! Watch thy tongue and watch thine eyes," and do the same for the seven members.[1624] For, it has been said: "Hell has seven gates." Its gates are thy members because of each one may go to hell. Therefore, one recalls the sins that may come from each of these members and is wary of them. One remembers every act of worship that may be brought into existence by it and is eager about that. One determines to frighten the self. If it disobeys, one punishes it, for the self, however refractory and stubborn it may be, is amenable to counsel, and is affected by asceticism.

All of this is reckoning before action, as God Most High said: *Know that God knoweth what is in your minds, so beware of Him.* (Q. 2:235) And the Messenger said: "He is astute who does his own account and does that which will be of benefit to him after death." And he said: "Examine every thing that comes up. If it is on the Way, do it. If it leads one astray, do not do it and keep distant from it." Therefore, every day in the morning, the self needs such a stipulation, except for the person who is righteous. Then too, everyday is not devoid of some new affair that is also in need of stipulation.

[1623] That is, "Suppose that thou are forgiven, but have done no good deeds."

[1624] The seven members of the body: the head, the breast, the belly, the hands, and the feet; or: the head, hands, sides, and feet.

THE SECOND STATION: CONCERNING VIGILANCE

The meaning of vigilance is guarding and observing.[1625] Just as when merchandise is entrusted to a partner and the stipulations made, one must not be neglectful and one must remain alert with him, the self is also in need of alertness at every moment. If thou neglectest it, it will revert to its own nature in sloth and the indulgence of its appetites. The root of vigilance is that one know that God Most High is well acquainted with one in whatever one does and thinks. Mankind sees one's exterior, but God Most High sees one's interior. The exterior and interior of whoever has come to know this and whose soul has been mastered by the love of spiritual insight become chastened. If one does not have faith in this, one is an unbeliever. If one has faith, opposition is a great audacity for one, for God Most High says: *Does he not know that God sees?* (Q. 96:14) "Dost thou not know that God Most High sees thee?"

And that Ethiopian said to the Messenger: "I have committed many sins; is there repentance for me?" He replied: "Yes, there is." (The Ethiopian) asked: "At the time I sinned, did God Most High see?" (The Messenger) replied: "Yes, He saw." (The Ethiopian) exclaimed: "Ah!" cried out, and gave up the ghost.[1626] The Messenger (S) said: "Worship God as though—thou mightest say—thou seest Him. If thou canst not, indeed, know truly that He sees thee." Without thy knowing that He is watching over thee in all conditions, things will not come right. As He said: *Lo! God has been watching over you.* (Q. 4:1) Rather, the entirety of it is that thou be constantly in His view and that thou see Him.

One of the spiritual guides had a disciple whom he used to regard highly. The other disciples became jealous. He gave a chicken to each disciple and told him to kill it some place where it would not be seen. Each one went to a place alone and killed the chicken, but that disciple brought his chicken back alive. (The master) asked: "Why didst thou not kill it?" He answered: "I did not find any empty place where no one would see, for God Most High sees every place." So, with this, his degree became apparent to the others, for he is always witnessing, and he does not pay attention to anyone else.

When Zulaykha[1627] invited Joseph to come to her, she had previously gone to that idol which she considered a god and covered its

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[1625] "observing" (*nigāh dāshtan*): or, "preservation, maintenance."

[1626] This story recalls its earlier appearance in the First Chapter of this Book.

[1627] Zulaykhā: the name of the wife of Potiphar in Arab and Islamic tradition. The 12th Chapter of the Quran is devoted to the story of Joseph, but she is not named, nor is she in the Bible. See Exodus 39:6-18. The incident of her covering the face of the idol so that it would not witness her proposed adultery is not found in the Quran, but is related in commentaries. The story of Joseph and Zulaykha is discussed in detail in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* and the separate volume *Jacob and Joseph* taken from that.

face with a veil. Joseph said: "Thou art ashamed before a stone; why should I not be ashamed before the Creator of the seven heavens and the earth Who sees and hears (all)?" Someone saw Junayd and said: "I cannot control my eyes. How can I do that?" (Junayd) said: "By thy knowing that God Most High is looking at thee more than thou art looking at that person."

In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High said: "The Paradise of Eden is for those persons who, when they intend to sin, remember My greatness and stop and are ashamed."

'Abdullah bin Dinar[1628] said: "I was with 'Umar (bin) Khattab on the way to Makkah. We stopped at a place. A slave who was shepherding some sheep came down from a mountain. 'Umar said (to him): "Sell me one of the sheep." (The slave) said: "I am a slave and this is not my property." ('Umar) said: "Tell thy master that it was carried off by a wolf. How will he know?" (The slave) said: "But God will know even if my master does not." 'Umar wept and sought out his master and bought the slave from him and freed him, saying: "That one utterance of thine freed thee in this world and freed me in the next world."

EXCURSUS: [THE VIGILANCE OF THE TRULY RIGHTEOUS AND THE VIGILANCE OF THE ASCETICS]

Know that vigilance is of two types:

ONE is the vigilance of the truly righteous: their souls are immersed in the greatness of God Most High and are broken by His awesomeness. In them, there is no room for paying attention to other than He. This vigilance is brief. When the soul stands firm and the body's limbs are subservient, it refrains from the permitted things.[1629] How would it take to sinning? It has no need of remedy or stratagem to prevent the limbs. It was for this that the Messenger said: "*God spares him who has arisen and whose concerns are become one concern from the concerns of this world and the Hereafter.*" All the affairs are accomplished of a person who arises in the morning with one aim.

There is the person who is so immersed in this that if thou speakest to him, he will not hear and should a person come to him, even though his eyes are open, he does not see (him). 'Abd al-Wahid bin Zayd was asked: "Dost thou know anyone who in his own state is occupied with people?" He said: "I know one who is just coming." 'Utbah al-Ghulam entered. ('Abd al-Wahid) asked (him): "Didst thou see anyone

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[1628] ᶜAbdullāh bin Dīnār: Belonging to the 1st Islamic (7th CE) century, he narrated Traditions cited by Malik bin Anas, the founder of the Malikite school of religious jurisprudence.

[1629] "permitted things" (*mubāḥāt*): permitted, but neither lawful nor unlawful.

on the way?" He answered: "No one," though his way had been through the public market. John, the son of Zechariah, passed by a woman. He touched her with his hand and she fell on her face. He was asked: "Why did you do that?" He replied: "I thought that she was a wall." Someone says: "I passed by some people shooting arrows. One was sitting apart from them. I desired to converse with him, (but) he said: 'The remembrance of God Most High is better than talking.' I said: 'Art thou alone?' He answered: 'No, for God Most High and two angels are with me.' I said: 'Whom among these people is ahead (in the sport)?' He said: 'He whom God forgives.' I said: 'Which way is the road?' He turned his face to the heavens, stood up, and departed, saying: 'O Lord God, most [of Thy] people are diverted from Thee.'"

Shibli went to Abu al-Husayn Nuri.[1630] He saw him sitting quietly in vigilance, for not a single hair on his body was moving. (Shibli) asked: " From whom didst thou learn such excellent vigilance?" (Abu al-Husayn) replied: "From a cat. I saw him waiting by a mouse hole and he was stiller than this."

Abu 'Abdullah Khafif[1631] says: "In Tyre, they pointed out to me an old man and a young man who continually sat in vigilance. I went there and saw two persons who were sitting facing the direction of prayer. I greeted them with "*peace*" three times, but they did not answer. I said: 'By God Most High, it is incumbent upon you to return a greeting.' The youth raised his head and said: 'O Bin Khafif, this world is little and of that little, no more than a little is left. From that little, take much as thy portion. O Bin Khafif, thou hast much leisure to engage in greeting us.' Having said this, he lowered his head. I was hungry and thirsty, but I forgot my hunger and thirst; they had seized my entirety. I stood and performed the noon and afternoon obligatory formal prayers with them. (Then) I said: 'Give me some counsel' He said: 'O Bin Khafif, we are the people of suffering; we do not possess the tongues of counsel.' I remained there for three days; neither did I eat anything, nor did I sleep. Then, I said to myself: 'I shall make them swear to give me some counsel.' I had not yet said anything when the youth raised his head and said: 'Seek the company of a person, the sight of whom will remind thee of God Most High, and whose awesomeness will fall upon

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[1630] Abū al-Husayn Nūrī: Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Nuri. Mentioned by Qushayri, he died AH295/907-9CE. He was learned and eloquent. He said: "In our time, the most precious things are two: the scholar who practices his knowledge and the sage who speaks the truth."

[1631] 'Abdullah Khafif: Abū ʿAbdullāh Muhammad bin al-Khafīf of Shiraz. He was of royal descent. 'Attar and Hujwiri each have chapters about him an mention him in other places. He is also mentioned frequently by Qushayri. He counted five men in whom it was proper to have confidence and whom could be followed. Harith was the first. Others said that 'Abdullah was the sixth, a sign of his spiritual attainments. He died AH371/982CE.

thy soul and who will give thee counsel with the tongue of action, not with the tongue of speech.' *And peace!*"

This is the state and the degree of the vigilance of the truly righteous whose totality is immersed in God Most High.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the vigilance of the ascetics and the Companions of the Right Hand. These are people who know that God Most High is informed about them and before Whom they are ashamed. However, they have not become overwhelmed and immersed in the greatness and majesty of God Most High. Rather, they are aware of themselves and the states of the world. They are like the person who works alone or who keeps himself naked. A child appears. He is ashamed before (the child) and clothes himself of his own choice. The similitude of the other is that a king suddenly comes to him and he is filled with terror at (the king's) majestic presence. Unknowingly, he clothes himself. He leaps from his place and becomes overwhelmed by (the king's) majesty. Therefore, a person who is in this degree must always be vigilant over all his states, thoughts, and actions. In everything he desires to do, there are for it two examinations:

The first examination is before one does it. Perhaps, he listens for the first thought that appears in his soul. He is constantly vigilant about his soul and the thoughts that appear in it. He looks: if it is for God, he completes it; but if it is for the passion of the self, he stops and is ashamed before God Most High. He reproaches himself as to why this motive had appeared in himself. He acknowledges his disgrace in the Hereafter and its punishment. At the beginning of all thoughts, this vigilance is a religious obligation, for in the Traditions it is related that three ledgers are placed before the servant of God for his every voluntary movement and resting: one is for "why," another is for "how," and the third is for "for whom."

The meaning of the first: "Why?" It is that it is said that it is incumbent upon thee to do it for the sake of God Most High; or didst thou do it for the appetite of the self and in agreement with Satan?

If one comes through this safely and it has been for the sake of God, it is asked: "In what manner?" That is: "How didst thou do it?" For every right there is a prerequisite, a rule, and some knowledge. Didst thou do that which thou didst in accordance with the prerequisite of knowledge, or wert thou ignorantly lax?

If one comes through this safely and it has been done according to the conditions, it is asked: "For whom?" That is, it was necessary for thee to do it in sincerity and do it for God. If thou hast done it for Him, thou wilt obtain a reward, but if thou didst it for appearance and hypocritically, thou hast fallen subject to loathing and punishment. For, it has been said to thee: *Surely, pure religion is for God only.* (Q. 39:3)

And it was also said: *Lo! Those on whom ye call beside God are servants like unto you.* (Q. 7:194)

Whoever has recognized this, if he is wise, will not be neglectful in vigilance. The foundation of this is that he block the first thought, for if it continues, an inclination for it will appear. Then, that will change to resolve. Then, it will become a determination and spread to the limbs. The Messenger (S) said: "*Fear God at the time of thine intention when thou considerest doing something.*" When the intention for some act appears, restrain thyself for (fear of) God. Know that recognizing which of those thoughts are from God and which are from the passions of the self is a difficult and rare knowledge. A person who does not have this power (of discrimination) must always be in conversation with a pious learned person so that his lights will spread to him. One should avoid the learned who covet the world, for Satan has appointed them his viceroys.

God Most High revealed to David (A): "O David, beware of friendship with a learned person whose love for the world has intoxicated him, for he will lead thee away from loving Me. They are highwaymen (preying) on My servants." The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High loves the person who is sharp-sighted in the moment of doubt and is perfectly rational at the moment of the attack of the carnal appetite." There is perfection in both of these, for one recognizes the true nature of the circumstance with a penetrating vision and then repels the appetite with perfect wisdom. These two go together. Whoever does not have an intellect repelling appetite does not have penetrating vision in doubtful matters. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "The intellect has parted from whoever has committed a sin and will never return." Jesus (A) said: "There are three things to do: perform the plainly right, avoid the plainly wrong, and leave the obscure among them to the learned."

The second examination is the vigilance at the time of acting. Its states are not devoid of three kinds: either devotional, sinful, or permissible (but morally neutral).

Vigilance in the acts of devotion is that they be performed with sincerity and with the presence of the soul and with total respect for the rules. One should not refrain from adding anything to them that increases their moral excellence.

Vigilance in sinning is that one be ashamed and repent and busy oneself with atonement.

Vigilance in the permissible (but morally neutral) is that it be proper and that one see God Most High as the Benefactor in that blessing and know that one is in His Presence at all times. For example, if one sits, one should sit properly. If one lies down, one should lie on the right side and lie facing the direction of prayer. If, for example, one is eating food, the soul should not be free from meditation; for that is better than all other works. In every food, there are a number of the marvels of (His) artifice in the creation of (the food's) form, color, smell, taste, and shape;

and in the human members that are used in (eating) the food, such as the fingers, the mouth, the teeth, the throat, the stomach, the liver, and the kidneys, and that which is for the acceptance of the food and that which is for the keeping of the food so that it will be digested, and that which is for the elimination of the dregs.[1632] All of these are the wonders of His making and meditation upon them is a great act of worship. This is the degree of the learned.

There are some who are thus: that when they see these wonders of (His) making, they progress to the greatness of the Maker and immerse themselves in His majesty, beauty, and perfection. This is the degree of the unitarians[1633] and the truly righteous. Some look upon food with the eye of anger and loathing, in opposition to appetite, and they look at their own need and busy themselves with: "Would to God we were not in need of (food)!" They meditate upon this necessity and are constantly vigilant about this matter. This is the degree of the ascetics.

And there are some who look at it with the eye of appetite and all of their thoughts come back to how they can manage to eat the best, the most delicious, and the most! Then, it may happen that they criticize the cooking, the cook, the fruit, or the food, not knowing that all of these are handiwork of God Most High, and criticism of (His) artifice is the criticism of the Maker. This is the degree of the heedless. These degrees appear in all permissible (but morally neutral) matters.

The Third Station Is Reckoning After the Act

There must be a period of time at the end of the day, at the time of going to bed, when one reckons the account with one's self for the entire day, separating the capital from the profit and loss. The capital is the religious obligations; the profit is the voluntary acts of worship, and the loss is the sins. Just as one must bargain with one's partner so that one not be defrauded, one must exercise more caution with one's own self. For, the self is a rogue and is cunning, and there are many subterfuges. It counts its own purpose an act of devotion to (thy credit) so that thou imagine that it is a profit, while it may be that it is a loss. Indeed, with respect to all of the permissible (but morally neutral) things, one must question the accounting: "Why didst thou do that and for what didst thou do it?" Then, if one sees a loss upon one's self, it is debited to

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[1632] "the dregs" (*thufl*): a euphemism for bodily wastes.

[1633] "unitarians" (*muwaḥḥidān*): believers in the absolute oneness of God: not to be confused with the modern religious denomination which originated among Protestant Christians in 18th CE century England, although in its original formulation—the denial of the Trinity and the godhood of Jesus—the Unitarian credo had much in common with the doctrines of Islam.

it and one seeks a reparation from it. Ibn al-Sammah[1634] was one of the saints. He reckoned his own account: it was sixty years. He reckoned the days: they were 21,500 days. He said: "Alas! If there be not more than one sin per day, how may I be delivered from 21,500 sins? Especially when there were days when there were a thousand sins!" Then, he cried out and fell down. They came to him and seized him; he was dead.

But the heedless person is he who does not take up his own accounting. If he threw a stone into his house for every sin he commits, in a short time the house would be filled with stones. If the Recording Angels were to request from him payment for their writing down (all of his sins), all that he possessed would go for that. But, if he negligently wishes to say "*Glory be to God*" a few times, he drapes a string of beads in his hand and tells them,[1635] and (then) he says: "I said it one hundred times," and he does this uselessly every day, and that when he has not dropped a bead in his hand so as to know whether he had passed a thousand! Then, if he hopes that the scale pan of good deeds must be heavier (for that), it is out of stupidity. It was for this that 'Umar said: "Weigh thine own deeds before they weigh thee down." When night fell, 'Umar would take a scourge and beat his feet and say: "What hast thou done today?" 'Ayishah says: "Abu Bakr said at the time of his death: 'No one is more beloved to me than 'Umar.' Then he said: 'What did I say?' I told him, he said: 'No, no one is dearer to me than he.' He had reviewed the calculation for this (statement) and since it was incorrect (in his view), he amended it."

Ibn Salam[1636] placed a load of firewood on his shoulders and went outside. They said: "Slaves do not do that." He said: "I am teaching my self how it is in this." Anas says: "I saw 'Umar in a courtyard behind a wall saying to himself: 'Bravo! They call thee the Commander of the Believers. By God, if thou fearest God; if not, thou hast made a punishment for thyself." Hasan Basri said: "*The censuring self* is that one censure oneself: thou hast done such-and-such and hast eaten such-and-such. Why didst thou do that and why didst thou eat that? One censures oneself." Therefore, the reckoning over past things is one of the necessities and is inescapable.

[1634] Ibn al-Ṣammah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1635] "tells them": counts off the beads, as one does when reciting a rosary.

[1636] Ibn Salām: Muhammad bin Salam al-Jamhi, a 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century narrator mentioned by Ibn Khallikan with respect to Yunus bin Habib, the noted grammarian who died c. AH182/799CE.

THE FOURTH STATION: CONCERNING PUNISHMENT OF THE SELF

Know that when thou hast completed the reckoning of the self and it has committed some fault that thou passest over, it becomes emboldened and thou wilt not be able to catch up with it any more. Instead, thou must punish it for whatever it has done. If it has eaten something doubtful, punish it with hunger. If it has looked at someone not among the prohibited degrees,[1637] punish it by not looking and by closing the eyes, and (do) the same with all the body members. The forefathers did thus.

One of the spiritually insightful touched a woman. He put his hand in fire until it was burned. One of the worshippers among the Children of Israel spent some time in a hermitage. A woman displayed herself to him. He took a step outside of the hermitage to be nearer to her. Then he grew afraid of God Most High and he repented and made to return. He said: "No, this foot went out in sin and should not be taken back into the hermitage." He kept it that way (outside) until it was destroyed by cold and heat and fell off.

Junayd says: "Ibn al-Karibi[1638] said: 'One night I had a nocturnal emission. I wanted to perform the greater ablution immediately, (but) the night was cold and my self was lethargic and said: "Do not expose thyself to destruction. Wait until morning and go to the public bath." I swore not to bathe except with a ragged garment, and I would wet (that) and not wring it out so that it would dry on my body, and that is what I did. I said that this is suitable for such a self which commits shortcomings with respect to God Most High.'"

Someone gazed upon a woman and afterwards regretted that. He swore that punishment for this would be that he would never again drink cold water, and he never did. Hassan bin Abi Sinan[1639] passed by a scene and said: "Who has done this?" Then he said: "Why dost thou ask about something with which thou hast nothing to do? By God, I shall punish thee with a year's continuous fasting." Abu Talhah was performing a formal prayer in a grove of date palms. A bird appeared (before him). Its beauty diverted him and he became doubtful about the number of bows

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[1637] That is, if one looks at someone of the opposite sex with whom marriage is not forbidden. Since marriage with parents, grandparents, sons and daughters, siblings, etc., is prohibited ("the prohibited degrees"), looking at them does not imply any sexual interest or intent.

[1638] Ibn al-Karībī: Possibly, the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century Abu Ibn Karib, or Kurayb, or Karnab, al-Darir, otherwise unknown, who was the putative founder of a heretical sect which expected the return of Abu Hanifah and denied his death; or more probably a mistake for a teacher of Junayd by name of Ibn al-Karnabi. *Karnab* and *karib/kurayb* have the same general shape in Arabic script with a difference of a dot or so.

[1639] Ḥassān bin Abī Sinān: Qushayri mentions him as narrator of anecdotes about Hasan al-Basri and Thabit al-Bunani. Also, see Note 901 on Hassan bin Sinan.

(he had performed). For that reason, he gave away that date-grove in charity.

Malik bin Daygham says: "Ribah al-Qaysi[1640] came looking for my father after the afternoon obligatory formal prayer. I told him that he was sleeping. He said: 'What a time for sleeping!' and turned back. I went after him. He was saying: 'Thou spokest impertinently: "What a time for sleeping!" What business is it of thine? I have sworn not to lay my head upon a pillow for year.' As he was proceeding, he was weeping and saying: 'Wilt thou also not fear God Most High?'"

One night, Tamim Dari[1641] was asleep and missed the night formal prayer. He vowed not to sleep any night for a year.

Talhah (R) relates: "A man stripped himself and rolled himself on small hot stones saying: 'O lazy carrion by night and idle by day, how long (must I endure) thee?' The Messenger (S) approached him and asked: 'Why art thou doing thus?' He answered: 'My self dominates me.' (The Messenger) said: 'At this moment the gates of heaven have been opened for thee and God Most High and the angels take pride in thee.' Then he said to the Companions: 'Take thy provision from him.' They all went and said (to the man): 'Supplicate on our behalf.' He did so, one by one, and the Messenger (S) said (to him): 'Supplicate for all collectively.' He said: 'O Lord God, make piety their provision and keep all of them on the straight path.' And the Messenger (S) said: 'O Lord God, direct him to the right way': that is, so that a better supplication would come upon his tongue. (The man) said: 'O Lord God, make Paradise their resting place!'"

There was a concourse of the great. One of them looked up at a rooftop and saw a woman. He vowed never again to look at the sky. At night, Ahnaf Qays (R) would pick up a lamp and always hold his finger on the (flame of the) lamp, saying: "On such-and-such a day why didst thou do such-and-such a thing and why didst thou eat such-and-such food?" Thus were the resolute. They knew that the self is rebellious. If thou dost not discipline it, it will overpower thee and destroy thee. They were harsh with it.

[1640] Ribah al-Qaysi: Ribāḥ bin ʿAmr al-Qaysī. Mentioned by Qushayri.

[1641] Tamīm Dārī: Tamim bin Aws al-Dari, a Companion of the Prophet of northern origin. He converted to Islam during the time of the Prophet, living in Madinah until the murder of Caliph 'Uthman, but his family remained Christian. Before the prohibition of alcoholic drinks, he was a wine merchant. He was appointed governor of *Bayt al-Maqdis*, which usually refers to Jerusalem, but could mean, in this case, Hebron, with which he has associations. He was reputedly the first to dedicate himself to sermonizing at the mosque with illustrative stories and exegesis. He died AH40/660-1CE, or earlier. (EI)

THE FIFTH STATION IS EARNEST STRIVING

Know that some have noticed a laziness in their selves. They have punished them for that by forcing them to perform many acts of worship. As for Ibn 'Umar, whenever he would miss a congregational formal prayer, he would remain awake that night until the day. As for 'Umar, he missed a congregational formal prayer and he gave away property in charity worth two hundred thousand dirhams. Ibn 'Umar was late for the sunset prayer so that two stars had appeared: he manumitted a slave. There are many such stories. When the self is not obedient in worship, the remedy is that one converse with an earnest striver in the faith[1642] so that one may become desirous by seeing him. Someone says: "Whenever I become lazy in worship, I look into the earnest striving of Muhammad bin Wasi' and the desire for worship stays with me for a week. Consequently, if one does not find such a person, one should read the states and stories of the earnest strivers in faith. We shall refer to some of them:

Dawud Tayi would not eat bread. He would moisten bits of bread in a bowl and drink it. He would say: "Between that and this which I eat one can recite fifty verses of the Quran. Why should I waste time?" Someone said to him: "A beam of thy roof is cracked." He said: "I have been in this house for twenty years and have not looked at that." He loathed looking (at anything) as useless.

Ahmad (bin) Razin[1643] sat from morning to the afternoon formal prayer without looking in any direction. He was asked: "Why dost thou do this?" He replied: "God Most High created the eye for looking at the marvels of His creation and His greatness. An error will be recorded against whoever does not look to take a lesson." Abu al-Darda (R) says: "I love life for only three reasons: prostration during long nights, thirst during long days, and sitting with people whose speech is all excellence and wisdom."

'Alqamah bin Qays[1644] was asked: "Why dost thou keep thy self in such torment?" He replied: "Out of the love I have for it I keep it from hell." They said: "Thou art not obligated to do all of this." He said: "I do what I am able to do so that tomorrow there will be no regrets as to why I

[1642] "earnest striver in the faith" (*mujtahid*): The word *mujtahid* here means a striver in a general sense. It is also used in a technical sense, especially amongst the Shiah, to designate a person qualified to issue opinions on religious law and morality and, in that sense, is similar to the *muftī*, the more common term for this among the Sunnis, one who is qualified to issued similar opinion.

[1643] Ahmad bin Razīn: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1644] 'Alqamah bin Qays: 'Alqamah bin Qays al-Aswad, he was an Iraqi jurisprudent famous for his piety and knowledge of Traditions. He died about AH61/681CE.

had not done it." Junayd says: "I have not seen anyone more remarkable than Sari Saqati. He lived ninety-eight years and no one saw his side on the ground except at the time of death." Abu Muhammad Jariri[1645] stayed in Makkah for a year without speaking or sleeping. He did not lean his back (against anything), nor did he stretch out his legs. Abu Bakr Kattani said to him: "How wert thou able to do that?" He answered: "My inner self knew the truth and my outer self gave the strength."

Someone says: "I saw Fath Mawsili weeping, his tears mixed with blood. I asked: 'What is this?' He said: 'For a time I wept water for my sins, now I weep blood for those of my own tears which were not sincere.'" He was seen in a dream. They said: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "He has made me dear because of those weepings, and He said: 'By My Might, the angels have been bringing the record of thy deeds to Me for forty years in which there is no error.'"

Dawud Tayi was asked: "What would happen if thou combed thy mustache and thy beard?" He said: "Then I would be finished with the manliness that I have been cultivating." Uways Qarani used to divide the nights. He would say: "Tonight is the night of bowing," and he would remain in a single bow until dawn. The next night, he would say: "Tonight is the night of prostration," and he would remain in a single prostration until dawn. 'Utbah al-Ghulam would not consume any fine food or drink because of his great striving. His mother said to him: "Be kind to thy self." He said: "I seek kindness for it. It must endure hardship for a few days to be everlastingly in ease and kindness."

Rabi' said: "I went to see Uways Qarani. He was performing the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer. When he finished, I said (to myself) that I should not speak to him until he has finished the glorification. I continued waiting but, of course, he did not rise from his place until he performed the noon obligatory formal prayer and the afternoon obligatory formal prayer. It continued thus until the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer of the following morning, and his eyes became sleepy. He came out of the sleep and cried: 'O Lord God! I seek refuge with Thee from my very sleepy eyes and my gluttonous stomach.' I said: 'I have seen enough of him for myself,' and I went back."

Abu Bakr 'Ayyash[1646] did not lay his side upon the ground for forty years. Then, black fluid came in his eyes and he kept that secret from his family for twenty years. Performing five hundred bows of

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[1645] Abu Muhammad Jariri: Aḥmad bin Muḥammad bin al-Ḥusayn al-Jarīrī. 'Attar devotes a chapter to him. Qushayri notes that he was one of the greatest of Junayd's disciples and his successor. He died AH31/923-4CE.

[1646] Abū Bakr ʿAyyāsh: He narrates an anecdote about Dawud Tayi in *Tadhikarat al-Awliya'*, thus placing him in the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century. ('Attar)

formal prayer every day used to be his practice. In his youth, he would recite *Say, He is God, the One*[1647] three thousand times a day.

Kurz bin Wabrah[1648] was one of the saints. He strove to be so that he would recite the entire Quran three times a day. They said to him: "Thou hast given thyself a lot of trouble." He said: "How long is the life of this world?" They said: "Seven thousand years." [1649] He said: "How long will the Day of Resurrection last?" They said: "Fifty thousand years." He said: "Who is there who would not endure hardship for seven days to rest for fifty days? That is, if we live for seven thousand years and I strive for the Day of Resurrection, it is still little, in comparison with that which is without end, especially with this meager life span that I have."

Sufyan Thawri says: "One evening I went to Rabi'ah. She had gone into the prayer niche in order to perform formal prayer until the day(break) and I was performing formal prayer in a corner of the room until the pre-dawn. Then, I said: 'How should we give thanks for His giving us the divine favor of spending the night in formal prayer?' She said: 'By our fasting tomorrow.'"

These are the states of the earnest strivers. There are many of these and relating them would be lengthy. We have cited more of them in *The Revival*. If a servant of God does not achieve these states, at all events, he should hear them in order to recognize his own shortcomings and so that the desire for goodness move in him and he able to stand up against his self.

The Sixth Station: Concerning Reproving the Self and Reprimanding It

Know that this self has been so created that it flees goodness and indulges in evil. Its nature is slothfulness and the satisfying of its appetites. Thou hast been charged with turning it away from these qualities and bringing it back from straying to the (straight) path. Some of this may be accomplished by harshness with it, some by gentleness, some by action, and some by words; for it has been so created in its nature that when it sees its own good in some matter, it heads for that, even though there be hardship which it may endure. However, most often its veil[1650] is ignorance and heedlessness. When thou awakenest it from the sleep of heedlessness, and thou holdest a bright mirror to its face, it will accept that. It is concerning this that God Most High said: *And warn, for warning profiteth the believers.* (Q. 51:55)

[1647] That is, the 112th Chapter of the Quran which begins with those words.
[1648] Kurz bin Wabrah: Qushayri relates an anecdote about him.
[1649] It was thought that the world would last seven thousand years.
[1650] The veil separating the self from righteousness.

Thy self has been created of the same stuff as the selves of others. In the end, counsel and reprimand will influence it. Therefore, first counsel thine own self and reprove it; in fact, never cease reproving and reprimanding it. Say to it: "O self! Thou claimest to be clever and thou becomest angry if someone says thou art a fool, but who is more foolish than thou? If a person occupies himself in play and laughter at the time that an army is at the city gates waiting for him and someone has been sent to carry him off and destroy him while he is engaged in amusements, who would be more foolish than he? And the army of the dead is waiting at the city gate. They have vowed not to leave until they have taken thee off. Hell and heaven have been created for thee and it is possible that thou will be carried off on this very day! If they do not carry thee off today, they will do it tomorrow. Assume that that which will be done has been done. Death does not make an appointment (saying): 'I shall come by night or by day, or I shall come late or early, or I shall come in winter or in summer.' He seizes one suddenly and takes one at a time when one feels most secure. If thou art not prepared for him, what foolishness is there greater than that? *Woe unto thee, O self!*"

Every day thou art engaged in sins. If thou supposest that God does not see, thou art an unbeliever. If thou knowest that He sees, thou are very impudent and shameless, for thou dost not fear His awareness of that. If one of thy slaves acted so disobediently with respect to thee, look at how thine anger would be against him! So, how hast thou become immune from the anger of God? If thou imaginest that thou possessest the strength to endure His punishment, thrust thy finger into a (burning) lamp, or sit in the sun for an hour, or make thy residence in the hot chamber of the public bath until thou perceivest thine own helplessness and weakness. Or, thou supposest that thou wilt not be seized for whatever thou doest! As a result, thou art a denier of the Quran and God Most High and consider one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets (R) to be liars who say: *He who doeth wrong will have the recompense thereof.* (Q. 4:123) Whoever does evil will see evil. *Woe unto thee!*

Surely, thou sayest: "He is Generous and Compassionate and He will not punish me." Why does he keep one hundred million people in hunger, sickness, and hardship? Why does he who does not sow not reap? Why, when some carnal appetite comes to thee, dost thou employ all the stratagems on the face of the earth (to satisfy it)? Thou mayest obtain it, but do not say God is Compassionate. Does He Himself arrange my affairs without my own troubling (about them)? *Woe unto thee!*

Surely, thou sayest: "This is the way it is, but I do not have the strength to endure the trouble." Dost thou not know that taking some trouble is more obligatory for a person who cannot endure (the trouble) in order to escape the sorrow of hell tomorrow? Whoever does not suffer will not escape suffering, for if thou hast not the strength to endure this amount of hardship today, how wilt thou find the strength to endure the

suffering of hell, degradation, abjectness, being driven, and accursedness? *Woe unto thee!*

Why dost thou endure so much suffering and wretchedness in the pursuit of silver and gold? Dost thou abstain from all thy carnal appetites in seeking physical well-being at the word of an ignorant doctor? Thou dost not know this much: that hell is harder than poverty and illness, for the length of time of the Hereafter is longer than the life span of the world. *Woe unto thee!*

Surely, thou sayest: "I plan to repent and take up some activity better than this." It may be that while thou art thinking about this, death suddenly appears and those regrets will remain in thy hands. If thou supposest that it will be easier to repent tomorrow than it is today, it is ignorance. For, however much more thou delayest, it will be (that much) more difficult. Then, when death approaches, it will be as though, for example, it were said at the base of a difficult mountain pass, there is no profit in feeding the beasts of burden any barley. Thou art like the person who travels to acquire learning. He is indolent in his learning and says: "On the last day, when I am going to return to my city, I shall make the effort and learn some knowledge." He does not know this much that the acquisition of knowledge requires a long time. In the same way, the treacherous self must be placed in the crucible of repentance and earnest striving until it is purified in order for it to achieve the degree of spiritual insight, intimacy, and love, and to cross all of the obstacles of the path. If life has passed and been wasted, how canst thou do this without a reprieve? Why dost thou not consider youth a windfall before old age, good health before sickness, leisure before labor, wealth before poverty, and life before death? *Woe unto thee!*

Why dost thou provide for the winter in the summer and not delay, and why dost thou not have faith in the grace and generosity of God Most High? Well, the intense cold of hell is not less than the frigidity of winter,[1651] and the heat of hell is not less than the heat of summer. Thou dost not commit shortcomings in all of these affairs (of the world) and (yet) thou so doest with respect to the matter of the Hereafter! No, certainly, there is a reason for thy not having faith in the Day of Resurrection and the Hereafter. Thou hast this unbelief inside thee and thou concealest it from thyself. This will be the cause of thine eternal perdition. *Woe unto thee!*

Whoever supposes that, without going into the protection of the light of spiritual insight, the fire of carnal appetite after death will not blaze in his soul is as though he supposes that without being in the protection of a heavy cloak, the cold of winter will, by the grace and

[1651] The winters of the Iranian plateau where Al-Ghazzali was born and died can be extremely cold and snowy.

generosity of God Most High, not approach his skin! He does not understand this much: that His grace is that since He had created winter. He has shown thee the way to a cloak and created the cloak and arranged the materials for it, not that He would ward off the cold (from thee) without (thy wearing) a cloak. *Woe unto thee!*

Do not think that sin leads thee to punishment because God Most High is angered at thy refractoriness, so that thou say: "What harm has my sinning done to Him?" It is not thus. Rather, the fire of hell is also produced inside thee by thy carnal appetites, just as thy sickness in thy body is produced by thine eating a poison or harmful things, not because the physician becomes angry because of thine opposition to his instructions. *Woe unto thee!*

It is not other than that thou hast settled down with the world's pleasures and ease and, in thy soul, thou hast become tied to it and hast become its lover. If thou dost not believe in hell and heaven, thou certainly believest in death. All of this will be taken back from thee and thou shalt burn in thy longing for (that which thou hast lost). Make firmer the love for that in thy soul as much as thou desirest, for the sorrow of separation is proportionate to the love. *Woe unto thee!*

What dost thou hold on to in the world? If the entire world is given to thee from the east to the west, and all prostrate themselves before thee, after a time, thou and they will become dust that no one will remember, just as monarchs of the past are not remembered. When nothing but a little of the world will be given to thee, and that too loathsome and distressing, thou sellest everlasting Paradise for this! *Woe unto thee!*

How thou wouldst laugh if someone were to buy broken pottery with a night-illuminating jewel! The world is breakable pottery; consider it suddenly smashed. Consider that eternal jewel is lost and consider that the regret remains![1652] Reprimand the self with these and their like so that thou will have done right by it, and thou will have begun thy sermon with thy self. *Peace!*

[1652] "The world...remains!" following AA's text. HK has: "The world is breakable pottery and will inevitably be broken. Consider that the eternal jewel is lost and consider that the regret remains!"

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCERNING MEDITATION

Know that the Messenger (S) has said: "*An hour's meditation is better than a year's worship.*" One hour of reflection is better than the worship of one year! There are many places in the Quran in which meditation, consideration, contemplation, and reflection[1653] have been commanded. All of these are meditation. Whoever recognizes the merit of meditation, but who does not know its true nature, and its quality and manner, does not know what this meditation is about, why it is, and what its fruit is. Consequently, an exposition of this is important. We shall first discuss its virtue; then, its true nature; then, that meditation is for the sake of Him; and then, that meditation is about Him.

The Virtue of Meditation

Know that that the degree of an act, one hour of which is better and more meritorious than a year of worship, is tremendous. Ibn 'Abbas (R) says: "Some people were meditating about God Most High. The Messenger (S) said: 'Meditate upon His creation and do not meditate upon Him, for ye do not have the strength to endure that and cannot know its magnitude.'" 'Ayishah (R) says: "The Messenger (S) was performing formal prayer at night and weeping. I asked: 'Why dost thou weep, O Messenger of God when thy sins have been forgiven?' He replied: 'Why should I not weep when this verse has been revealed to me: *Lo! In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the difference of night and day are tokens for the understanding.*' (Q. 3:190) Then he said: 'Woe unto him who reads this and does not meditate upon it.'"

Jesus (A) was asked: "Is there anyone on the face of the earth like thee, O Spirit of God?" He said: "There is; anyone whose speech is all remembrance (of God) and whose silence is all thinking, and his looking is all the taking of a lesson. He is like me." Our Messenger (S) said: "Give your eyes a portion of worship." They said: "How?" He said: "(By) reading the Quran from the Book and meditating upon Him and taking lessons from His wonders." Abu Sulayman Darani said:

[1653] "reflection" (*iʿtibār*): This is not the usual Persian meaning of the word, but is an Arabic definition. *Iʿtibār* is the verbal noun of the (Arabic) verb *yaʿtabir* which, in addition to the meanings of "to take warning, deem, regard, esteem," etc., also has the meaning of "to consider, weigh, reflect upon, take into account," etc., meanings not stressed in modern Persian. Ghazzali frequently uses technical Arabic words in their Arabic meaning, whereas the Persian meaning may have deviated somewhat from that over time. While both Arabic and Persian are conservative languages in comparison with English, Arabic—because perhaps of the role of the Quran in its development—is the more conservative of the two.

"Meditation concerning the world is the veil of the Hereafter. The fruit of meditation upon the Hereafter is wisdom and the life of souls." One night on the roof of his house, Dawud Tayi was meditating upon the kingdom of the heavens and weeping so that he descended (by mistake) into the house of his neighbor. His neighbor jumped up and seized a sword; he thought it was a thief. When he saw him, he said: "Who threw thee down here?" (Dawud) answered: "I was unaware; I do not know."

The True Nature of Meditation

Know that the meaning of meditation is seeking knowledge. Every (kind of) knowledge that does not become evident spontaneously must be sought. Seeking it is not possible unless thou puttest two spiritual realizations together and reconcile them so that they are mated together and from those two realizations they produce a third realization, just as a child is produced from between male and female. Those two realizations are like two roots for the third realization. Then, this third realization is also joined with another so that a fourth appears from it. And so, it goes on generating and knowledge is increased infinitely. If anyone is unable to acquire knowledge in this manner, it is because he does not take the path of those sciences which are basic. He is like the person who has no capital, how can he engage in trade? If one knows (the realizations), but does not know to join them together, he is like the person who has capital but does not know how to engage in business. The exposition of this truth is lengthy. Let us relate an allegory concerning this meditation, and it is thus:

A person wants to know whether the Hereafter is better than this world. He cannot know this until he knows two things about the world: One is that the everlasting is better than the transitory, and the other is that he know that the Hereafter is everlasting while this world is transitory. Therefore, when he has learned these two principles, the knowledge that the Hereafter is better than this world will necessarily be engendered. We do not intend by engendering what the Mu'tazilites intend by it.[1654] The explanation of this would also be lengthy.

Therefore, the true nature of all meditation is the seeking of the knowledge that appears from the summoning of two pieces of knowledge. However, just as when two horses mate they do not produce a sheep, so just any two items of knowledge do not engender just any

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[1654] Ghazzali is referring to the Mu'tazilite doctrine of "generated effects" (*tawallud*), which concerns the question of human responsibility for acts and that, superficially at least, contradicts the assertion of predestination. The Mu'tazilites believed in free will: how else could a man be responsible for his acts? The doctrine of *tawallud* asserts that the effects of an act are attributable to him who performs it and he remains responsible for it, even after his death. (SEI, Watt, Rahman)

knowledge thou mayest desire. Instead, for every kind of knowledge there are two more roots. If thou dost not prepare those two roots in the soul, the branch does not appear.

Disclosing Why Meditation Is Necessary

Know that a human being is created in darkness and in ignorance. He is in need of a light that comes from outside of that darkness and knows the way to its task as to what must be done and in which direction he should go: to this world or the Hereafter; and whether he must be occupied with himself or with God. This is not discernible, except with the light of spiritual insight, and this light of spiritual insight appears from meditation. As it is related in the Traditions: "*God created mankind in darkness; then He sprinkled them with His light.*" As when a person becomes helpless in the dark and cannot find his way, he strikes a stone on iron so that from that, the illumination of the sparks will appear and he may light the lamp. With that lamp, his condition changes and he regains his sight and discriminates the (correct) way from the wrong way. Then, he starts to walk. In the same way, this is an allegory of the two basic pieces of knowledge: they are put together so that a third knowledge may be born, as with the stone and the iron. The allegory of meditation is the striking of the iron with the stone. The allegory of the spiritual insight is the light which appears so as to change the state of the soul. When the state changes, the task and the work change. And when one sees, for example, that the Hereafter is better, he turns his back on the world and faces towards the Hereafter.

Therefore, meditation is for three things: a spiritual insight, a state, and a task. But, the task follows upon the state, and the state follows upon the spiritual insight, and the spiritual insight follows upon meditation. As a result, meditation is the root and key to all good things, and its virtue appears with this.

Disclosing the Sphere of Thought: In What Does It Lie and Where Does It Go?

Know that the range and sphere of thought is limitless, for there is no limit for studies, and thought flows in all. However, it is not our purpose to expound upon all that is not related to the way of religion. As for that which is related to the way of religion, even if the details of that are limitless, it is possible, nonetheless, to discuss its sum total and its kinds.

Know that we intend by the way of religion the intercourse between the servant of God and God Most High, for that is his way to reach God. The meditation of the servant of God is about himself or

about God. If it is about God, (it is) either about His essence, or about His attributes, or about His acts, marvels, and handiwork. If he meditates upon himself, (it is) either about the qualities which are disliked by God and which distance him from God—and they are sins and Destroyers; or (it is) about that which is loved by God which brings him closer to Him, and they are acts of devotion and the Deliverers. Hence, the sum total of this is four spheres of activity. The servant of God is like the lover whose thought does not leave his beloved for any reason. If it does so, his love is deficient; for, love is total and there is no room left for anything else. So, his thought is about the beauty of the beloved and her beautiful form, or about her deeds and character. If he thinks about himself, either he does so to make himself more acceptable to his beloved and to seek (the means for) that, or (he thinks) about that in himself which displeases (his beloved) and (how) to avoid that.[1655] Every thought that is according to the rule of love is not outside of these four. The thought of love for religion and the friendship of God Most High is the same.

THE FIRST SPHERE: It is that one think about oneself (to discover) what characteristics and deeds are repugnant to Him so that one may cleanse oneself of them. These are the external sins or the criminal traits inside one, and they are many. For, some of the external sins are related to the members of the body, such as the tongue, the eyes, the hands, etc., and some to the entire body. The internal malignancies are the same. There are three areas for thought in each one of these: first, as to whether such-and-such a deed or such-and-such a trait is repugnant or not; this is not always clear, but may be known through meditation. Second, whether I have this trait, if is repugnant, or not. The traits of the soul are not easily recognized either. Third, if (I) have this (repugnant) trait, what can be done to be liberated from it?

Therefore, one must mediate about this an hour every morning. One first thinks about the external sins. One thinks about the tongue that will be afflicted with speech this day. It may fall into backbiting or lying. One considers the plan as to how one may avoid this. In the same way, if it is in danger of (consuming) an unlawful food, how may one avoid this? One must investigate each of the bodily members in the same way. One must also consider all acts of devotion. When one has finished this, one should think about the good qualities in order to implement them. For example, one says: "The tongue has been created for remembrance (of God) and the ease of the Muslims. I am able to perform such-and-such a

[1655] I have made the object of love feminine in accordance with modern English convention, however, the corresponding Arabic passage in *The Revival* uses the masculine. Since Ghazzali has repeatedly condemned the physical aspects of homosexual love, one can only presume that here is he is referring to intense friendship and perhaps what is now called "male bonding."

remembrance and utter such-and-such pleasing words so that I give peace to a person. The eyes have been created to be the net of religion by which one catches (spiritual) happiness. With these eyes, I look upon such-and-such a learned man with the eye of respect and I look at such-and-such a sinner with the eye of contempt, so that I will have done right by (my) eyes. Wealth has been created for the ease of the Muslims, so that I give such-and-such wealth in charity and if I have a need, I shall be patient and be generous."

One should reflect upon these and their like every day. It may happen that with an hour's reflection, an idea occur that keeps one from sinning for one's entire life. It is this kind of meditation which is better than the worship of a year, because its benefit lasts one's entire lifetime. When one has meditated upon the outward acts of devotion and sins, one turns to the inward and contemplates one's character, as to what is inside one and what the Deliverers are and which of them one does not have in order to seek them out. This too is lengthy, but the true Destroyers are ten. If one obtains release from these ten, it is complete: miserliness, pride, vanity, hypocrisy, envy, quick temper, gluttony, garrulousness, the love for wealth, and love for rank. The Deliverers are ten: repentance,[1656] regret for sins, patience in adversity, satisfaction with (God's) decree, gratitude for blessings, regarding fear and hope as equal, asceticism in this world, sincerity in acts of devotion, a good nature with mankind, and the love for God Most High.

There is much scope for thought in each one of these and the gates are wide open for a person to learn the lore of these attributes, as we have discussed in this book. A servant of God should keep a journal for himself in which he writes down these qualities. When he has finished dealing with one, he may cross it off and busy himself with another quality. It may happen that some of these thoughts with which one is afflicted are more important for one person (than for another). For example, the humble savant who has been delivered from all of this usually is not devoid of some vanity with regard to his knowledge, and he may seek fame and rank by declaring it. He regards his own worship and appearance adorned in the eyes of the people and he may delight in his popularity. If someone sneers at him, rancor seizes his soul and he busies himself with retaliation.

All of these are crimes, but they are more obscure, and they are all the seeds of the corruption of faith. Therefore, every day he must think about this so as to flee from it and make the presence or absence of people equal to him, so that his looking is all at God. There is much opportunity for thought in this.

[1656] "repentance" (*tawbah*) is omitted in the Persian mss., but HK adds it by analogy to the Arabic text of *The Revival*, to make up the missing tenth point. AA does not add it.

So, from all this it is clear that there is no end for the mediation of the servant of God upon his own qualities of these two types, (the outward and the inward). However, it is not possible to elaborate further.

THE SECOND SPHERE IS MEDITATION UPON GOD MOST HIGH. Meditation (upon God) is either about His essence and attributes, or about His acts and handiworks; and the greatest station is meditation upon His essence and attributes. However, if people do not have the strength for that and their intellects not comprehend it, the Religious Law has forbidden it and has said: "Do not meditate about that *for truly ye have not the strength for its magnitude.*" This difficulty is not because of the concealment of the majesty of God; rather, it is from its radiance. It is intensely bright, while human vision is weak and cannot support it. Instead, one becomes stupefied and perplexed at it, just as the bat does not fly by day because its eyes are weak. It does not possess the strength to endure the brilliance of the sun and cannot see by day. At evening, when a little bit of the light of the sun remains, it (can) see. The common folk of mankind are at this level. However, the truly righteous and the saints have the strength for this sight, but not continuously. For they will become weakened, as when people look at the sun's disc, but if they prolong this, it is feared that they will become blind. In the same way, in this looking (at the majesty of God) there is the fear of stupefaction. Consequently, it is not allowed to disclose to the people that which the saints know about the truths of the attributes of God Most High, except in words which are close to the attributes of mankind, as, for example, thou wouldst say: scholar, disciple, and scholastic theologian. He comprehends something of these things, both from the nature of his own attributes and that which is allegorical. However, this much must be said, that His speech is not like thy speech, which has letters and sounds and which has the linkage and separation (of words). When thou sayest this, it maybe that (the listener) not have the power to (comprehend) this and deny it; just as if thou sayest to him, His essence is not like thine essence, for it has neither substance, nor breadth. It is neither in a place, nor on a place. Neither does it have direction, nor is it connected to the world, nor is it separated from it. Neither is it exterior to the world, nor is it within it. (The listener) will deny this and say that it is inherently impossible, because he compares that with himself. He cannot understand any greatness) from this, because the greatness (the people) have seen they consider to be the greatness of monarchs who sit upon thrones and who also have slaves standing before them.

Then, in the same way, they suppose something imaginary with respect to Him, so that it may be they say that He would certainly have hands, feet, eyes, ears, a mouth, and a tongue, because they have seen these in themselves. They suppose that if He does not have them, it would be a defect! If a fly had the same intelligence that these people

have, it would say the Creator would necessarily have feathers and wings, for it is absurd that I have something that is my strength and power that He does not have!

Therefore, a man too, in the same way, makes analogy of all matters with himself. For this reason, the Law forbade this thought and the forefathers forbade scholastic theology and did not consider it permissible to say that He is not in the world and not outside of the world, or He is not connected, and not separated. They were content with this: *Nothing is like Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.* (Q. 42:11) Nothing resembles Him.[1657] They said this in general, not in detail. They considered speaking (about this) in detail heresy. For this reason, the intellects of most people cannot comprehend it either. Because of this, revelation came to some of the prophets: "Do not inform My servants about My attributes for they will deny them. Say this to them, that they cannot be comprehended." Therefore, it is preferable that this not be discussed, nor should it be meditated upon, except by a person who is perfect. And then, too, he will necessarily fall into perplexity and stupefaction at the end.

Consequently, His greatness must be sought in the marvels of His handiwork, for whatever is in existence is all light from the lights of His power and His greatness. Though a person does not have the strength to look at the sun, he does have the strength to look at that (portion) of His light that has fallen upon the earth.

Disclosing Meditation Concerning the Wonders of God Most High's Creation

Know that everything in existence is all His handiwork. All is wondrous and strange. There is not an atom of the atoms of the heavens and the earth that does not glorify and sanctify its own Creator in the language of signs, saying: "Well done! A power in perfection! Well done! A knowledge without end!" This is much greater than could accept a detailed explanation. Instead, if all the seas became ink and all the trees became pens, and all created things became scribes who write during long lives, that which they write would be a very small part of that which is. As He said: *Say: Though the sea became ink for the words of my Lord, verily the sea would be used up before the words of my Lord were exhausted.* (Q. 18:109)

But on the whole, created things are of two kinds: One kind is that of which we have no knowledge and upon which we cannot meditate. As He said: *Glory be to Him Who created all the pairs, of that*

[1657] For this reason, God cannot be represented by paintings and statues.

which the earth groweth, and of themselves, and of that which they know not! (Q. 36:36)

As for that of which we are aware, there are two kinds: One is that which cannot be seen by the eye, such as the Throne, the angels, devils, fairies, and their classes. Meditation upon these is also difficult.

So we must confine ourselves to that which is visible, and that is the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth and that which is upon it, such as mountains, seas, deserts, towns, and that which is in the mountains of ores and minerals, and that which is upon the earth of different kinds of plants and animals other than human beings—when we come to man, he is more remarkable than all—and all that is between heaven and earth, such as clouds, rain, snow, hail, lightning, thunder, the rainbow, and the signs that appear in the air.

Thus, this is the sum and total. In each one of them, there is scope for meditation, for all are marvels of God Most High's handiwork. So let us refer briefly to some of them. All of them are signs of God Most High at which thou hast been commanded to look and meditate upon, as He said: *How many a portent is there in the heavens and the earth which they pass by with face averted!* (Q. 12:105) And He said: *Have they not considered the dominion of the heavens and the earth and what things God hath created?* (Q. 7:185) And He said: *Lo! In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the difference of night and day are tokens for the understanding;*' (Q. 3:190) There are many such verses. Therefore, meditate upon these signs:[1658]

THE FIRST SIGN IS THAT THOU ART CLOSEST TO THYSELF and there is nothing on the face of the earth more marvelous than thou, yet thou art heedless of thyself. A Cry comes: "Look down upon thyself to see Our greatness and majesty!" *And in yourselves: Can ye then not see?* (Q. 51:21)

So, meditate upon thyself at first as to whence (thou camest). At first, He created thee from a droplet of fluid, and He made the first residence for that droplet the loins of thy father and the breast of thy mother. He made earth of thy mother's womb and He made a seed from thy father's spine. After that, He made the seed of thy creation. Then He appointed passion to the male and female so that the seed would be sown in the earth. Then, He made the menstrual blood irrigate that seed and created thee from a drop of semen and menstrual blood. First, some blood congeals, then it becomes flesh, that which is called the fetus.

[1658] It should be pointed out that the Arabic word *āyah* has the more general meaning of "sign." As the verses of the Quran are considered signs of God's mercy and concern for mankind, the verses are also called *āyah* (pl. *āyāt*). Al-Ghazzali uses the word in both meanings in this passage.

Then, He breathed life into it. Then, from that simple[1659] blood and liquid, He caused a multitude of things to appear in thee such as skin, flesh, veins, sinews, and bones. Then, from all of these, He gave form to thy limbs. He created a round head, two long arms and long legs and at the end of each, (limb) five branches.[1660] Then, on the exterior, He created eyes, ears, a mouth, a nose, a tongue and the other organs; and inside thee, the stomach, the kidneys, the liver, the spleen, the gall bladder, the bladder, and the plentiful intestines. Each one has its own shape and its own attribute, and has a different size. He divided each of these into several parts. Each finger has three joints, and each member is composed of flesh, skin, veins, fat, and bones. He created thine eyes—not larger in size than a walnut—in seven layers, each layer possessing a special quality. If one of them fails, the world becomes dark for thee. If we were to expound on the marvels of the eye alone, many pages would be blackened (with ink).

Then, look at thine own skeleton and how He created a hard and firm solid from a delicate and thin liquid. Every part of it has its own shape and size; some (bones) are round, some are long, some are broad, some are hollow, and some are solid, each one is mounted on the other. In the size, shape, and appearance of each, there is a wisdom; rather, there are many wisdoms. Then, He made the bones the pillars of the body and He built everything upon them. If (the skeleton) were one piece, thou wouldst not be able to bend thy spine. If it were scattered loosely about, thou wouldst not be able to hold thy spine straight or stand upon thy feet. Therefore, He created it in segments so that it could bend. Then He put it together and wound sinews and veins on it and made it strong. Then, He made it like a single unit to stand erect when needed.

On each vertebra (of the spine), He brought out four projections like swellings and in the vertebra beneath it four depressions like hollows so that those projections would be seated in the hollows and stand firm. From the sides of the vertebrae, He brought out projections so that the sinews could be wound about them, to strengthen them, so that one rests upon another. He made thy whole skull of fifty-five pieces of bone and bound them together with fine seams so that if one part is damaged, the others will be sound and all will not be broken. He created teeth, some with broad crowns to grind food, and others with thin and sharp crowns to cut and break up food and (then) pass (the pieces) to the molars.[1661] Then, He created seven vertebrae for the neck with veins and sinews tightly wound about them and mounted the head upon them. He created

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[1659] "simple" (*yak-sifat*): simple in the scientific sense, that is, unalloyed, uncompounded, singular.

[1660] "five branches" (*panj shākh*): the five digits at the end of each limb: fingers and toes.

[1661] "molars": Al-Ghazzali uses the word "mill" (*āsyā*) as in millstones. The English word "molar" derives from the Latin *molaris*, which also means "mill."

the spine of twenty-four vertebrae and placed the neck on it. He inserted the broad ribs in these vertebrae, and the same for the other bones, the description of which would be lengthy. In sum, He created two hundred and forty-eight bones in thy body, each one with a special purpose so that thine affair would be correct and prepared. He created all of this out of that despicable fluid. If one of those bones were missing, thou wouldst be rendered helpless; if there were one more of them, thou wouldst (also) be helpless.

Then, since thou hast a need to move these bones and members, in all of thy body members He created five hundred and twenty-seven muscles, each one of a unique shape. Some are shaped like fish, with thick middles and narrow ends; some are small and some are large. Each one is made up of flesh and sinews with a veil that is like its sheathe. Twenty-four muscles are employed so that thou mayst roll and move thine eyes and eyelids in every direction. Make the analogy with others, for the explanation would also be lengthy.

Then, He created three cavities in thy body and He opened channels from them to all parts of the body. One is the brain from which the nerve channels come out and reach the entire body so that the faculties of sense and movement flow throughout it. From it, He placed a main channel[1662] running through the vertebrae so that the nerves become distant from the brain and then dry up. Another is the cavity of the liver from which He opened the veins to the seven body members to bring nourishment to them. The third is the cavity of the heart, and he opened veins from it to the entire body so that the spirit may move through it and from the heart reach to the seven body members.

Then, meditate upon each of thine own members; how He created each member and to what purpose He created it. He created the eye in seven layers in a shape and color that cannot be better. He created eyelids to wipe all around it and to clean it. He created the eyelashes straight and black to better (them) so that the pupil of the eye would gain strength with them, and so that when dust appears in the air the lashes come together lest the dust reach (the eyes), while thou canst look out from between them. The eyelashes protect (the eyes) from particles that fall from above and they are like a fence for the eyes. More wonderful than all this is that though the pupil is no larger than a lentil, the form of the heavens and the earth in all their expanse appear in it so that if thou openest thine eyes for a moment, thou seest the sky in it. If the marvels of the sight of the eye and the sight of a mirror and that which appears in it falsely were to be discussed, it could not be related in many volumes.

Then, He created the ear and placed a bitter fluid in it so that no creature would enter it. He created the external shell of the ear so as to

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[1662] That is, the spinal chord.

collect sound and deliver it to the hole of the ear. And in that, He created a multitude of twists and turns so that if thou art asleep and an ant or some creature makes to enter it, the way will be long and it will move about much and emerge a lot so as to make thee aware of it. If we explain the nose, mouth, and other members, it would be lengthy.

The point of this is that so that thou learn the method (of meditating upon the marvels of God's creation) and that thou think about each one and what it is for, so that thou become aware of the wisdom, greatness, kindness, mercy, knowledge, and power of the Creator. For, from thy head to thy toes, all are marvels; and the internal wonders and the storehouses of the brain and powers of the senses which have been placed in them are more wonderful than all else. Indeed, it is the same for the breast and the stomach, for He created the stomach like a pot that is always on the boil so that food may be cooked in it. The liver converts that food to blood and the blood vessels deliver that blood to the seven parts of the body. The gall bladder removes the foam of the blood that is like yellow bile and the spleen removes the dregs of that blood that is the black bile in it, and the kidneys remove the water from it and send (the water) to the bladder. The marvels of the womb and the generative organs are the same; and the intellectual marvels and powers that He created in him, such as sight, hearing, intellect, knowledge, and many more like those.

So, *O glory be to God*, if a person paints a fine picture on a wall, thou remainest struck by his craftsmanship and thou praisest it abundantly; yet, thou seest that all of these designs on one's exterior and interior appear from a single drop of liquid, but thou seest neither the brush nor the artist. Thou art not astonished by the greatness of this Artist, nor art thou stunned by the perfection of the power of His knowledge! Then, thou art not amazed by the perfection of His compassion and mercy! For, when there was a need for nourishment in the womb, if thou had opened thy mouth an inordinate amount of menstrual blood would have flooded thy stomach and thou would have been destroyed. He arranged that thy nourishment pass through the navel. When thou camest out of the womb, the navel was closed off and the mouth opened so that (thy) mother would be able to nourish thee in the proper amount.

Then, since thy body was weak and delicate at that time and could not endure (solid) food, He made that mother's milk, which is delicate, thy nourishment. He created the mother's bosom and He created the breasts on the bosom, and He created the tips according to the size of thy mouth and He created tiny openings in (the nipples) so that the milk would not flow too strongly for thee. He placed a bleacher within the chest to whiten the red blood that reaches it and give it to thee pure and fine. He charged thy mother with compassion so that if thou becomest

hungry any time, she becomes restless and uncomfortable. Then, since milk does not need teeth, He did not create teeth at the beginning of (thy) creation lest thou injure (thy) mother's bosom; until the time that the strength to eat (solid) food appears. Then, He creates teeth in thy mouth at the proper time, so that thou wouldst be able to contend with solid food.

There thou art! Blind of heart and blind of vision is a person who sees all these and is not astounded at the greatness of their Creator and is not amazed at His perfection and compassion, and who does not become a lover of such beauty and majesty! There thou art! Heedless and bestial is the person who does not meditate about these and does not think about himself and who wastes that intellect—the most valuable of things that he has been given—and knows no more than that when he becomes hungry, he eats bread, and when he is angry, he assaults someone. Like the beasts, he remains deprived of the contemplation of the garden of the spiritual knowledge of God Most High.

Let (the above) amount suffice as a caution, and it is not one one hundred thousandth of the wonders in thee! Most of them are in all animals, from the mosquito to the elephant, but the exposition of that would be lengthy.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE EARTH AND ALL THAT HE HAS CREATED UPON IT. If thou desirest to go beyond the wonders of thyself, look and observe the earth and how He has made it thy carpet and spread out its flanks broadly so that it would be steady and not move beneath thy feet. He has made good pure water to flow from under hard stones so that it travels over the face of the earth and it comes out gradually. If it were not held back by hard stone, it would flow out all at once and drown the world, or before a meadow could absorb it, it would be gone. Meditate upon the time of spring, when the face of the earth is all coarse dirt. When rain falls upon it, how it comes to life and becomes a brocade of seven colors;[1663] nay, a thousand colors, each one more beautiful than the other! Meditate upon the plants that appear and the flowers and the blossoms, each one with a different color and a different shape, each one more beautiful than the other!

Then meditate upon the trees and their fruit: the beauty and form of each one, the taste and deliciousness of each one, and the scent and

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[1663] "seven colors" (*haft rang*): although here the term is meant to indicate many colors, the seven colors are associated with the seven planets (in the original sense of that term which came from the Greek word meaning "wanderers, so that the Sun and Moon which also noticeably move across the heavens are included). Each planet was associated with a color: Saturn (black), Jupiter (brown), Mars (red), the Sun (yellow), Venus (white), Mercury (blue), and the Moon (green).

benefit of each one. Still more, the herbs,[1664] about which thou knowest less: how He has contrived in them beneficial marvels! One is bitter, another is sweet, another is sour; one cures sickness, another makes the healthy sick; one preserves life and another is poison that takes life; one excites the choler and another drives the choler out; one brings melancholy out of the extremes of the veins and another excites melancholy; one is hot and another is cold; one is dry and another is soft; one brings sleep and another causes sleeplessness; one brings joy and another brings sorrow; and one nourishes a person, another nourishes animals, while still another nourishes fowl! Meditate upon how many thousands of these there are and in each of them there are thousands of wonders in order to see the perfection of a Power by which all intellects should be stupefied; and this too is limitless.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE VALUABLE AND RARE DEPOSITS that He has hidden beneath mountains which are called minerals: those that are suitable for adornment such as gold, silver, rubies, turquoise, the fine rubies of Badakhshan, jet, jasper, crystal, lapis lazuli, and agate; those from which utensils are made such as iron, copper, bronze, tin, and lead; and those from other deposits which are suitable for other tasks, such as salt, sulfur, oil, and tar. The least of these is salt, which makes foods tastier. If salt is not available in a town, all of the food is spoiled and the taste leaves the food. All become ill and there is a danger of death. So, look upon His kindness and mercy. Even though He has provided thee with nourishment, yet since there is something necessary for the pleasure in it, He created salt from pure rainwater which comes and collects on the earth and becomes salt.[1665] This type is also without limit.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE LIVING CREATURES upon the face of the earth; some walk, some fly, others crawl. Some walk on two legs and others on four legs, and some have a multitude of legs. Then, observe the kinds of the fowl of the air and insects of the earth: each one has a unique shape and a unique form, each one better than the other. He has given to each one what it needs to function. He has inspired each one as to how to obtain its own nourishment and to how to tend and preserve its own offspring, and how to construct its abode.

Observe the ant, how it collects its food at the proper time. It knows that all wheat will spoil if left whole. It splits (the grains) so that weevils do not fall upon them. (It knows) that if coriander seed is not whole, it will spoil. It stores that whole.

[1664] "herbs" (*gīyah*): or, plants and grasses, as contrasted with trees and shrubs.

[1665] This is the salt that leaches out of the earth from rain and creates a crust easily gathered after the salt has dried. It is still a source of salt in parts of the Middle East and Africa.

Observe the spider, how it constructs its home and how it observes (the rules of) geometry. It manufactures thread from its own spittle and seeks a corner of two walls. It drops the construction from one side and carries it to the other to fix the warp well. Then, it begins to weave the woof and arranges the distance between the threads so that some are farther apart and others closer together, so that it is good and in proportion. Then, it suspends itself by one thread from the corner of the wall waiting until a fly, which is its nourishment, flies (into the net). Then, it throws itself upon it and captures it and wraps its limbs up in that filament so that it will not be able to escape. Then, it leaves it and goes in search of another.

Observe the bee that constructs its home all in hexagons, for if it had made them four-sided—and its (own) shape is round—the corners would have been left empty and wasted. In all shapes, there is none closer to the circle and more compact than the hexagon—this has been proved by geometry—and the Lord of the Universe in His kindness and mercy has shown so much care as to instill this into that small animal.

And He inspired the mosquito to know that its nourishment is blood and He created for it a sharp, thin, hollow proboscis[1666] so as to insert it into thee and draw out blood. He also gave it sensitivity so that when thou movest thy hand to catch it, it knows and flees. And He created two wings so that it could fly and be able to flee quickly and return quickly. If it had intellect and a tongue, it would have given thanks to its Creator for such favor and care so that all mankind would have been dumbstruck by that. However, from its head to its feet, it expresses its gratitude and its glorification, *but ye understand not their praise.* (Q. 17:44)[1667]

These kinds of wonders, too, have no limit. Who has the audacity to hope to come to know one of one hundred billion[1668] and say: "What dost thou say? Did these animals with their strange shapes and forms, beautiful colors, and well-made bodies create themselves, or didst thou create them?" Glory be to that God who can turn that sight back to blindness so that they do not see and make their souls heedless so that they do not think! They see with the eyes of the head, but they take no lesson with the eye of the soul. Their ears are insulated from hearing what they should, so that like beasts they hear nothing but sound. They do not enter into the language of the birds that has no letters. Their eyes are insulated from seeing what they should so that they do not see any

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[1666] "proboscis" (*khurṭūm*): This is the same word that is used for the elephant's trunk.

[1667] The complete verse expounds this theme beautifully: *The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise. Lo! He is ever Clement, Forgiving.* (Q. 17:44)

[1668] one-hundred billion: Al-Ghazzali writes this figure as "one hundred thousand thousand thousand." In Britain, it would be one hundred thousand million.

black line on white. They do not perceive those divine lines, which have neither letters nor characters, written on the outside and inside of all the particles of the universe.

Observe the ant's nest which is nothing more than a few particles and listen to what it says. It cries out with an eloquent tongue: "O simple-hearted one! If a person makes a picture on a wall, thou art astonished by the art and its mastery. Come and look to see a painting and the Painter, for I am nothing more than a particle from which the Artist, from the beginning of creation, would make of me an ant. Look at my parts, how He divides them to make for me a head, feet, heart, legs, and body parts. He constructs so many chambers and cupboards in my head and brain and in one, He places the faculty of taste, in another, He places the faculty of smell and smelling, in another, He places the sense of hearing. On the exterior of my head, He embeds eyes and forms on them the blackness of the eyes and the pupil of the eye. He forms the mouth that is the passage of food. He brings out of me feet and legs.[1669] He makes a space for the food to go so that it may be digested and a place for it to come out again. All the means for that have been created. Then, He makes a nimble shape for me in a body with three parts, and He binds them together.

He bound a sash of service like that of a chamberlain about my waist and put a black tunic (on me) and brought me into this world—all of which thou supposest He has created just for thee—so that I may go about in His favor just as thou doest. Indeed, He made thee subservient to me. Thou plantest night and day and sowest seeds and givest them water and preparest the soil in order to obtain barley, wheat, grain, seed, and kernels. Wherever thou hidest (the produce), He teaches me the way so that in my home beneath the earth I smell it and go straight to it. And thou, with all of thy labor, may not have enough for year, while I take the food for a year, and more, and store it securely. Then, I take my food to the desert and dry it in the sun. Before rain comes, the Creator inspires me that rain will come so that I may take it up and bring it back. And thou, if thou hast put a load (of grain) in the desert while flood and rain are on the way, thou hast no knowledge of that, so all will be lost and carried off by the water. Therefore, how could I not give thanks to the God Who creates me from a particle in this beauty and nimbleness and when He has established thee in thy hugeness before me to plant my food and to reap it and to work hard while I take it and eat it?"

There is no animal, small or great, that does not praise its Creator thus in the language of signs. Indeed, there is no plant that is not like that, crying this out. Indeed, there is no atom of the atoms of the

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[1669] "feet and legs": The text has "hands and legs," which is a set phrase used for such members on animals even when they are not so differentiated.

universe, even though it is solid, that does not proclaim it. But mankind ignores listening to their proclamation. *Verily they are far removed from hearing.* (Q. 26:212) *There is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise.* (Q. 17:44) This, too, is a world of unlimited wonders; how would the exposition of (all) be possible?

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE SEAS that are on the surface of the earth, each one of which is a part of the ocean which surrounds the land, and all the land is nothing more than islands in the middle of the sea.[1670] In the Traditions, it is related that the land in the sea is in the amount of a stable on the land. So, when thou hast finished examining the wonders of the land, proceed to the wonders of the sea; for, as much as the sea is greater than the land, so its wonders are more numerous. All land animals have an equivalent in the sea, and there are many creatures in the sea that have no equivalent on land. Each one of them is of a different shape and nature. One is so small that the eye cannot perceive it. Another is so huge that if a person were to alight on its back, he would think that it is a mountain. Then, when he builds a fire on its back, it may become aware of that and set into motion. They realize that they have landed on the back of a living creature! Concerning the wonders of the seas, many books have been written. How is one able to describe them here?

Look beyond the animals. At the bottom of the sea, He has created an animal that is called shellfish. The shell is its skin and He has inspired it so that when it rains on the sea, it comes to the shore and opens its shell so that drops of rain—which are sweet, not like the water of the sea, which is salty—may fall inside. Then it closes its shell and descends to the sea bottom while it keeps these drops of rain inside it, like semen in a womb. It nurtures the drops inside itself. God Most High has created the essence of shell in the nature of a pearl. He spreads that power to it for a long time, until the drop of rain becomes a pearl, some small and others large, so that thou mayest make of them an adornment and decoration. And in the sea, a red plant of stone grows having the form of a plant but the essence of stone. It is called coral. From its foam, a substance falls upon the shore that is called ambergris. The marvels of these substances, other than animals, are also many.[1671]

[1670] Though this concept of the universal ocean presupposed a flat world, nonetheless Al-Ghazzali's description is still valid, for 70% of the earth's surface is water and the continents are much like vast islands in the midst of these waters. A globe shows this truth more clearly than the flat world maps of an atlas.

[1671] It does not appear that Ghazzali had any close contact with the sea. He may have crossed the Red Sea or a corner of the Mediterranean, but more likely, he traveled by land. Consequently, his examples from the sea are rather more fabulous than those he has cited with respect to the land. The largest creature in the sea is, of course, the whale, but it is not likely he ever saw one. The story about building a fire on the back of some sea creature is a sailor's yarn, perhaps based upon building a fire on the back of a beached

More marvelous is the navigation of ships upon the sea, the construction of their shapes so that they do not sink in the water, the skilled guidance of the pilots to distinguish a favorable from a contrary wind, the creation of the stars to be his guide where the whole world is water and there are no markers. Moreover, the creation of water in a delicate and bright form and the linkage of its parts, one to another, and in the forming of the life of all things of plants and animals in it, is more marvelous than all else. For, if thou art in need of a single drink of water and do not obtain it, thou wouldst give the world, the wealth of the world that thou possessest, all the wealth on the face of earth in order that it be given thee. But, if that drink of water stayed in thy belly and the way was closed so that it could not come out, thou wouldst expend all that thou hast to be free of it. All in all, the wonders of water and the sea are also limitless.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE AIR AND THAT WHICH IS IN IT, for the air too is a sea and has surging waves. The wind is its surging waves. (It is) a substance so subtle that the eye cannot perceive it. It does not veil the sight of the eye and it is the continuous nourishment of thy life. There is a need for food and drink once or twice a day, but if thou dost not draw breath for a moment and the nourishment of the air does not reach inside thee, thou are destroyed while thou are heedless of it!

One of the characteristics of air is that vessels are suspended from it so that they do not sink in the water. The exposition of the manner of this is considerable and lengthy. Observe what He has created of clouds and rain and snow and thunder and lightning in the air before it reaches the sky. Observe those thick clouds that suddenly appear in the midst of the air. Perhaps they rise from the sea and take up water; perhaps they come into existence in the manner of vapor from the mountains; perhaps they appear from the air itself. Rain falls upon places that are far distance from mountains, the sea, and springs, drop by drop, each drop coming in a straight line, destined to fall in a specific place so that such-and-such a thirsty worm will become sated with water, and such-and-such a plant that would dry up will become moist, and to give water to such-and-such a seed that is need of water. It must go to the root of a withering tree on which is such-and-such a fruit and enter it. By way of its veins, each of which is finer that a hair in thinness, it flows to reach that fruit so that it will be moist and fresh in order that thou may eat it negligently, unaware of His kindness and mercy.

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whale which suddenly revives. Ambergris does not come not from coral, but comes from the sperm whale. The story of the oyster receiving drops of fresh water leading to the creation of the pearl is also fanciful, as pearls result from the irritation of sand and other particles inside the animal. The point, however, is that people believed in these marvels, yet nonetheless ignored the lesson to be derived from them.

Upon each (drop) is written where it shall descend and to whose sustenance it belongs. If the entire world were called to make known the number of their drops, they would not be able to do so. Then, if the rain comes and goes all at once, the plants do not grow gradually. He makes the cold overcome (the rain) on its way so that it is turned into snow and it comes down like carded cotton. He has made the mountains the storehouse (of the snow) in order to collect it there to remain cold and not melt quickly. Then, when the heat of spring appears in the air, it melts gradually and the channels flow with (water) according to need, so that throughout the summer that water will be used gradually on the fields. If it were not thus, rain would have to come all the time and cause a great deal of misery. If it came all at once and then passed, plants would remain thirsty all year. In the snow, there is such delicacy and mercy! And in everything, it is thus. Indeed, all the parts of the earth and the heavens, all have been created in truth, justice, and wisdom. For this He said: *And We created not the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in play; We created them not save with truth; but most of them know not.* (Q. 44:38-39) We created them not in sport: We created them in truth; that is, We created that which was right.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS, the stars, and their wonders. The earth and all that is upon it are trivial in comparison with that. All the Quran is a caution to meditate upon the wonders of the sky and the stars, as He said: *And We made the sky a roof withheld; yet, they turn away from its portents.* (Q. 21:32) And He said: *Assuredly, the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of mankind.* (Q. 40:57) Thus, He has commanded thee to reflect upon the wonders of the heavens and the earth, not so that thou see the deep blue of the sky of the white of the stars, or that thou raise thine eyes. Beasts themselves also see that. But thou, who dost not recognize thy self and the wonders of thyself that are nearer to thee and are not one particle of the marvels of the sky, how wouldst thou come to know the kingdom of the heavens? Rather, thou shouldst progress slowly. First, come to know thyself, then the earth, the plants, the animals, the minerals; then the air, clouds, and their wonders, then the heavens, then the Pedestal, then the Throne. After that, thou leavest the universe of physical bodies and enter the universe of sprits. At that time, thou comest to know the angels, Satan, the *jinn*, the ranks of the angels and their various stations.

So, thou must meditate upon the heavens, the stars, their motions and orbits, and their risings and their settings. Observe what they are and why they are. Observe the multitude of celestial bodies, (so many) that no one knows their number, each with a different color. Some are red, some are white, some are like mercury, some are small, and some are

large. Then, each of their groupings collected in different shapes,[1672] some in the form of a ram, some in the form of a bull, some in the form of a scorpion, and so forth. Indeed, for every form that there is on earth, there is a representation of their shapes in the stars there for thee. Then, (observe) their various routes and movements: some traverse the whole firmament in a month, some in a year, some in twelve years, and some in thirty. Most of them will traverse the firmament in 360,000 years—if the firmament remains and the Resurrection has not come. There is no limit to the wonders of their sciences.

When thou hast come to know some of the marvels of the earth, that their differences are appropriate to their different shapes, for the earth is so expansive that no one can comprehend all of it. The sun is about 160 times the size of the earth.[1673] With this, thou knowest that the distance of the stars is vast, for which reason they appear so small.[1674] With this, thou know that how fast they move, for in the space of half an hour the disc of the sun rises above the earth. It traverses a distance about 160 times that of the earth in that period.[1675]

It was about this that the Messenger (S) one day asked Gabriel if the End[1676] had been determined. He answered: "*Lā, naᶜam*. No, yes."[1677] (The Messenger) said: "How is that?" He answered: "From the moment when I uttered 'no' to now when I uttered 'yes' it has traveled five hundred years."

And, there are stars in the sky a hundred times the size of the earth that appear very minute because of their great altitude. If a star is like this, compare by analogy how much greater is the entire firmament! All of these with their vastness appear tiny in thine eye so that thou may recognize the greatness and sovereignty of the Creator. Then, in each star

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[1672] "shapes": Al-Ghazzali is here referring to the constellations. He then mentions Aries the Ram, Taurus the Bull, and Scorpio the Scorpion.

[1673] The diameter of the earth is about 7,900 miles, while that of the sun is 865,000 miles; in this measurement, the sun is about 110 times the size of the earth, rather smaller than Al-Ghazzali's more generous estimate.

[1674] Is Ghazzali suggesting that the sun and the stars are of the same nature?

[1675] Al-Ghazzali is describing the length of time it takes the disc of the sun to (apparently) clear the horizon. By his calculation, it travels 160 times the size of the earth in the half-hour or so it takes to do this. Of course, the effect of the sunrise is created by the earth's rotation rather than by the sun's moving in relation to the earth. The speed of the earth's rotation relative to its orbit around the sun depends upon one's latitude. At the equator the surface of the earth is turning at about 1,000 mph, while at the latitude of New York, for example, it is turning at something in excess of 500 mph.

[1676] "the End" (*zawāl*): the End of things. *And warn mankind of a day when the doom will come upon them, and those who did wrong shall say: Our Lord! Reprieve us for a little while. We will obey thy call and will follow the messengers. (It will be answered): Did ye not swear before that there would be no End for you?* (Q. 14:44)

[1677] "*Lā, naᶜam*. No, yes.": Ghazzali first gives the Arabic, followed by the Persian *nah, âri*. Both mean, of course: "No, yes."

there is a mystery: in its color, in its going and coming and stopping. Its rising and its setting are a mystery. That which is clearer, is the mystery of the sun, for the firmament has given it an inclination from the greatest heaven, so that part of the year, it is at the zenith and part farther away in order that the weather become variable. Sometimes it is cold, sometimes hot, and sometimes temperate. For this reason, there is a difference in night and day: sometimes (they) are longer and sometimes shorter.[1678] If we explain the manner of this, it would become lengthy.

Were we to expound upon that which God Most High has provided us of these sciences in this short life, it would take much time. All that we know is trivial and little, beside all that has been made known to the scholars and the saints. The knowledge of the all the scholars and saints is little beside the knowledge of the prophets concerning the details of the creation. The knowledge of the prophets is little beside the knowledge of the proximate angels. If thou join together all of this knowledge, in (comparison with) the knowledge of God Most High, it itself would not merit thy calling it knowledge. Glory be to that God Who has given to mankind so much knowledge! Then, He placed the stigma of ignorance upon all and said: *And of knowledge, ye have been vouchsafed but little.* (Q. 17:85)

This much is an illustration of the streams of thought. It has been cited so that thou know thine own heedlessness, for if thou goest to the abode of a prince that is painted and plastered, thou wouldst describe it for a long time and thou art amazed; while thou always see all these wonders in the House of God Most High and thou art not amazed! This physical universe is the House of God Most High. Its carpet is the earth, its roof the sky, but it is a roof without pillars, and that is more marvelous. Its treasury is the mountains and its storehouse is the seas. Its household goods and utensils are the animals and the plants. Its lamp is the moon and its torch is the sun. Its candles are the stars, and its torchbearers are the angels; yet, thou art heedless of the marvels of this House. The House is very immense and thine eye is minuscule and cannot contain it. Thou art as the ant that has a hole in the corner of the castle of a king and is unaware of anything save is own nest, its nourishment, and its comrades. It has no knowledge of the beauty of the architecture of the palace, the multitudes of slaves, the king's throne, and his kingship. If thou desirest to be satisfied with the degree of an ant, do so! But if not, thou hast been given entrance to wander admiringly in the garden of the spiritual knowledge of God Most High. Come out and open thine eyes so as to see its wonders and become astonished and amazed! *Peace!*

[1678] The marvel of the seasons is not diminished by the fact that they are caused by the inclination of the axis of the earth rather than by the movement of the sun.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCERNING THE UNITY OF GOD AND TRUST

Know that trust is one of the stations of the proximate ones, and its degree is great, but the knowledge of that in itself is subtle and difficult, while practicing it is hard. Its difficulty is that whoever sees no effect [in affairs][1679] for anything, other than God Most High, is deficient in his (belief in God's) Unity. If all causes are also set aside, one has found fault with the Religious Law. If one does not see a Causer for causes, one has been inimical to one's own intellect. If one sees it, it may be that one put one's trust in something else of the causes[1680] and fall into a deficiency (in one's belief in God's) Unity. Consequently, an explanation of trust, in as much as one confuses the intellect, the Law, and Unity and groups them all together, is an abstruse subject and not just anyone can comprehend it. First, we shall discuss the virtue of trust; then its true nature, and finally its states and acts.

The Virtue of Trust

God Most High has commanded all to trust (in Him) and has made that a condition of faith, saying: *So put your trust (in God) if ye are indeed believers.* (Q. 5:23) And He said: "God Most High loves the trusting": *Lo! God loveth those who put their trust (in Him).* (Q. 3:159) And He said: "Whoever trusts in Him; He is enough": *And whosoever putteth his trust in God, He will suffice him.* (Q. 65:3) And He said: "Is not God sufficient for the servant of God?" *Is not God sufficient for His servant?* (Q. 39:36) and there are many such verses.

And the Messenger (S) said: "Peoples were shown to me; I saw my own people filling the mountains and the plains and I was astonished at their great number and I rejoiced. I was asked: 'Art thou pleased?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'Together with these are seventy thousand who will go to Paradise without being called to account.'" (The Companions) asked: "Who are they?" He said: "Those who do not base their acts upon spells, auguries, and scars. They have faith in and trust nothing other than God Most High." Then 'Ukkashah[1681] stood up and said: "O Messenger of God, offer a supplication so that I may be one of them." (The Messenger) said: "'*Ukkashah has preceded thee in it.*"

[1679] From the AA text.

[1680] That is: rather than the Causer (God).

[1681] ʿUkkāshah: ʿUkkāshah bin Muḥsin, a Companion of the Prophet. A superb horseman, he fought bravely at the battle of Badr.

The Messenger (S) said: "If, as is the right of trust, ye had trusted in God Most High, He would have delivered your sustenance to you as he does to the birds who every morning fly out of their nests with empty and hungry stomachs and in the evening return sated and with full stomachs." And he said: "Whoever gives his trust to God Most High, God Most High makes their sustenance sufficient and He delivers it from an unexpected place. Whoever gives his trust to the world, God Most High leaves him to the world."

When Abraham (A) was seized to be placed on the catapult and thrown into the fire,[1682] he said: "*God suffices for me; He is a most excellent Advocate.*" When he was (thrown) into the air (by the catapult), Gabriel came to him and said: "Dost thou have any need?" (Abraham) replied: "No," because he was faithful to what he said, that God would suffice for him. And He described him with this trait, saying: *And Abraham who fulfilled (his word).* (Q. 53:37) Revelation came to David (A): "O David, there is no servant of God amongst all mankind who places his hand in Me that if all heavens and the earth arise to trick and deceive him, I would not give them an opening to him."

Sa'id bin Jubayr says: "A scorpion bit me. My mother swore over me: 'Give me thy (bitten) hand so that a spell can be spoken (over it). I gave the other hand which was sound to the worker of spells because of my mother's heart." This was because the Messenger (S) had said that a person is not trusting who casts spells and cauterizes.[1683] Ibrahim Adham says: "I asked a monk where he obtained his food. He said: 'Ask Him who gives sustenance, whence He sends it, for I have no knowledge of that.'"

Someone who was always engaged in worship was asked: "Whence dost thou get thy food?" He pointed to his teeth and said: "He Who created these millstones will send the load (to be ground by them)." Harim bin Hayyan asked Uways Qarani: "Where dost thou command me to take up my station?" He answered: "Syria." (Harim) asked: "What is the livelihood like there?" Uways said: "Their hearts are overwhelmed with doubt and they do not accept counsel."

[1682] This story about Abraham is not found in the Bible, although it can be found in Apocryphal literature in several forms. After destroying the idols worshipped by the people, he was condemned to death by burning. God saved him from the flames miraculously. For a discussion of Abraham, see the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* or the section on *Abraham* printed in a separate volume: *Abraham.*

[1683] "cauterizes" (*dāgh kardan*): The practice of fighting sickness with the application of hot objects or brands to the body still persists in the Arabian Peninsula. Several students the translator taught from that region showed him the scars on their persons resulting from similar treatment.

THE TRUE NATURE OF THE UNITY UPON WHICH TRUST IS BUILT

Know that trust is one of the states of the soul and it is the fruit of faith. Faith has many effects, but trust is one of those based upon two faiths: one is faith in the Unity of God and the other is faith in the perfection of (His) kindness and mercy. However, an explanation of God's Unity is lengthy and its study has no limit, but we shall note that much upon which trust is based.

Thou must know that the Unity is of four degrees: It has a kernel, and that kernel has a kernel; it has a skin, and that skin has a skin. Therefore, it has two kernels and two skins. Its similitude is a fresh walnut, in which the two sections of pith and the two coatings are evident. The (walnut's) oil is the pith of the pith.[1684]

THE FIRST DEGREE is that one declare *There is no god but God* with the tongue, but the soul does not have belief. This is the Unity of the hypocrite.

THE SECOND DEGREE means that one believes in imitation, like the common folk; or with some kind of a guide such as the scholastic theologian.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one sees in a witnessing vision that all proceeds from one source and that there is no more than one Agent; and that there is no agency (left) for anyone else. This is a light that appears in the soul. This vision is obtained through that light. This is not like the belief of the common folk and the scholastic theologian: that belief is a cord that falls on the soul, either by the device of imitation or the device of evidence.

This vision is an opening and it removes all ties. There is a difference between a person who is led to the belief that such-and-such a lord is at home because so-and-so says that he is at home—this is common imitation which he has heard from his mother and father—and one who deduces that the man is at home through the evidence of a horse and slave at the door of the house—this is the view of the scholastic theologian—and one who sees him by sight inside the house—this is the likeness of the unitarianism of the spiritually insightful. The degree of this Unity is great, but in it one sees the creation and the Creator and knows that the creation is from the Creator. So, in this (degree) there is

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[1684] The Unity of God with its four degrees is likened to a walnut: there is the fruit (nut) itself, which, in the case of a walnut, is divided into two sections, and the oil concealed within the nut, its most essential part. The nut has an (inner) skin, and the whole is enclosed in a hard shell, the outer skin. With respect to the analogy with the Divine Unity, progressing inwards, the shell is the declaration (*tashahhud*), the inner skin is the imitation (*taqlīd*), the meat of the nut is witnessing (*mushāhadah*), and the oil is annihilation (*fanā*). See text below.

abundance and number. As long one sees two, one is in disunion and not unified.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is the perfection of God's Unity, where one sees nothing save One. One sees all itself as one, and knows it as one, and disunion does not enter into this witnessing. This is what the Sufis call "annihilation" in God's Unity. Just as when Husayn Hallaj[1685] saw Khawwas[1686] walking about in the desert, he asked: "What art thou doing?" (The man) replied: "I am establishing my feet in trust." (Hallaj) said: "Thou hast spent thy life in the internal abode; then, thou satest down. When wilt thou reach (annihilation) in Unity?"

Therefore, there are these four stations:

FIRST, the Unity of the hypocrite. That is the outer skin,[1687] like the shell of a walnut. If thou eatest it, it will be unpleasant. If thou lookest inside it, it is ugly even though its exterior is green. If thou burnest it, it makes smoke and catches fire. If thou puttest it in thy house, it is of no use and takes up thy space. It is good for nothing except that thou leavest if for a few days so that it will keep the inner skin fresh and protect it from spoiling. The Unity of a hypocrite, too, does not serve any purpose, except that the shell protects it from the sword and the shell is its frame by which it escapes the sword.

[SECOND,] when it has become like the body: life remains, but its Unity has no benefit, just as the inner skin of a walnut is suitable for burning. It should be preserved on the meat (of the walnut) so that it may rest in its place and not spoil; but in comparison with the meat, it is trivial. The Unity of the common folk and the scholastic scholar is fit for this too, in that it preserves the meat—and that is one's life—from the fire of hell. But, even though it performs this function, it is devoid of the delicacy of the walnut meat and its oil. Just as the meat of the walnut is the object and is valuable, but when thou addest the oil to it, it is not devoid of dregs and it does not achieve perfect purity in itself.

THE THIRD DEGREE of Unity is also not free of disunion, number, and excess.

Rather, THE FOURTH (KIND) is the perfect purity of Unity, for in it God remains and nothing else. One sees naught but One. One also

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[1685] Husayn Hallaj: Abū al-Mughīth al-Ḥusayn bin Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj. Arberry calls him the supreme example of the "intoxicated" Sufi. His extraordinary pronouncement "*Anā al-ḥaqq*" ("I am Truth," or possibly "I am God.") was considered blasphemous and he was accused of atheism (*zandaqah*) for which he was executed at Baghdad AH309/922CE. 'Attar and others have defended him against these accusations. (Arberry, pp. 59-60; 'Attar, pp. 150-3; Munjid)

[1686] Khawwas: probably Ibrāhīm Khawwāṣ, see Note 1700.

[1687] "outer skin" (*pūst-i pūst*): Literally, the skin of the skin.

forgets oneself and one becomes non-existent with respect to seeing oneself, just as everything else has become non-existent in one's sight.

EXCURSUS: [A PERSON IS COMPELLED IN HIS OWN CHOOSING][1688]

Surely, thou wilt say: "These degrees of Unity are difficult for me. An explanation is required so that I may understand how I may see all from one while I see many causes. How can I see them as one while I see the heavens, the earth, and creation? All these are not one."

Know that the Unity of the hypocrite is with the tongue, the Unity of common folk is with belief, and the Unity of the scholastic scholar is with evidence. Thou art able to understand these three. The problems lie in the Unity of the last (kind).

As for the fourth Unity, there is no need of trust for it; trust is sufficient for the third Unity. Expressing in words and also explaining this fourth Unity to a person who has not attained it is difficult. However, in short, know this much: that it is permissible for there to be many things that have a kind of connection with one another. By means of that connection they become like one thing, because in the sight of a spiritually cognizant man, that phase comes (in which) he sees one and does not see many; just as there are many things for a man: flesh, skin, heart, foot, stomach, liver, etc., but in reality a man is one thing.[1689]

It may be that a person know a person as he knows one thing, not noting the details of the members of the body. If he is asked: "What didst thou see?" he says: "I did not see more than one thing. I saw a man." If they ask: "What art thou thinking about?" He answers: "I am thinking of nothing more than one thing; I am thinking of my beloved." So, his totality has become his beloved and that is one thing.

Then, know that there is a station in spiritual insight where, when a person reaches it, he really sees that all that exists is interconnected, one with another, and all are like one animate being. The relationship of the parts of the world, such as the heavens, the earth, the stars to each other, is like the relationship of the parts of one animate being to each other. The relationship of all the world to its Director—from one aspect; not from all aspects—is like the relationship of the kingdom of the body of an animal to the spirit and intellect which are its Director. Until a person recognizes this, that *Verily, God created Adam*

[1688] From the AA text.

[1689] Al-Ghazzali uses the word *mardum* for a "man" in this passage, which in modern Persian is usually used in a plural sense of "people, mankind." In classical Persian, it was more often singular, meaning "a man; a polite civilized man; civil, humane." (Steingass) HK notes that in the corresponding passage in *The Revival*, he uses the singular *ādamī*, "a man, a human being."

in His image,[1690] it cannot be comprehended by his understanding. We have referred to something of this in the Prolegomena, and it is better to shorten the discussion about it; for it shakes the chain of madmen and not everyone has the capacity for understanding for this.

As for the third Unity, the Unity which is activity, we have discussed this at length in the book *The Revival*. If thou art partial to that, thou mayst look for it (there). Let the amount we have said in the chapter on Meditation[1691] suffice, as thou knowest that the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the wind, the rain and all that thou think of as causes are all (in fact) subservient, like a pen in the hand of a scribe. Nothing moves on its own, for all are brought into action at the proper time and in proper amount, just as all should be. As a result, ascribing (the cause) to them is an error, just as ascribing the signature for a (royal) honor to the pen and paper (would be). However, that which is point of consideration is the free choice of animals, in which thou supposest that they have something. This is an error, for a human being is constrained and compelled and in the essence of his choosing. As we have said, his affair is fettered to power, and power is subservient to the will. Therefore, since power is subservient to the will, and the key to the will is not in his control, nothing is in his control. Thou comest to know all of this because thou knowest that an act that is imputed to a person is of three degrees:

ONE is that if, for example, thou puttest thy foot on water, it sinks. It is said that it has penetrated the water and separated it, one part from another. This is called a natural act.

ANOTHER is that it is said one has taken a breath. This is called an involuntary act.[1692]

THE THIRD is that it is said: "he spoke and left": this is called a voluntary act.

[1690] Not from the Quran. Cf.: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image...'" (Gen. 1:26)

[1691] The previous chapter.

[1692] "an involuntary act" (*fi'l-i irādatī*): This is a curious inversion of meaning. In Modern Persian, the word *irādī* means "voluntary," among other things. (The difference between Ghazzali's *irādatī* and modern *irādī* is because, in Ghazzali's work, there is a preference for the *at* Arabic feminine ending. Over the centuries, an increasing number of these forms have shifted to the *ah* ending, which is always dropped in Arabic—but not always in Persian usage—when the *yā-i nisbah* is attached.) Ghazzali is referring to the unquenchable will to life and to survive and protect oneself from injury that results in automatic responses to situations without much thought as well as sustaining acts such as breathing. In this sense, they are involuntary. They are the involuntary acts and reactions caused by the self-interest of the volition or will.

AS FOR THE NATURAL ACT, it is obvious that it is not under one's control, for if one goes upon the water, the water will necessarily part because of one's weight. This is not under one's control. Whether one wants that or not, it will be thus. Indeed, if thou placest a stone on the surface of the water, it will sink into it. Its sinking is not the act of the stone; rather, it necessarily follows from the weight of the stone.

AS FOR THE INVOLUNTARY ACT, it is like breathing. If thou reflectest, it is the same. If one wants to withhold one's breath, one cannot. One has been so created that the will for breathing appears in one, whether one desires it or not. If a person aims to hit someone in the eye with a needle[1693] from afar, that person will necessarily begin to shut his eyes. If he does not want to do this, he cannot (stop himself). For, he has been created thus, so that that volition will necessarily appear in him, just as he has been created so that he will necessarily sink in water when he stands on the water. Consequently, a person's being compelled is plain from both of these two (kinds of acts).

AS FOR VOLUNTARY ACTS, such a talking and walking, the doubt in this is as to whether one wants to do it or does not want to do it. But thou must know that if one wants to, at the time one wants to, his intellect decides: "This is good for thee." Perhaps, one needs some thought about this. When it has decided that one's good lies in (doing) that, the volition necessarily appears and the bodily members begin to act, just like the (involuntary) shutting of the eye when one sees a needle (coming at him) at a distance. Since the knowledge that a needle is harmful to the eye and closing (the eye) is good, one is always prepared (to react). It is plain that there is no need for thought about that. Without reflection, one knew that it is good. From the realization of that good, that volition appeared, and from that volition, power necessarily sets to work.

Here (in the voluntary act), once one has finished pondering, it has become of that character that was there (in the involuntary act), and that same necessity appeared. If a person picks up a stick to beat someone, (the one fleeing) naturally runs away until he comes to the edge of a roof. (If) he knows that leaping down will be easier (on him) than being beaten, he jumps. If he knows that it will be worse (for him), he necessarily stays where he is and does not move. For, the movement of his feet is fettered by the will, and the will is fettered by knowing that that is preferable. It is for this reason that a person cannot kill himself even though he has hands and a knife, because the power of the hand is

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[1693] "needle" (*sūzan*): The Persian *sūzan* refers to a needle, but Ghazzali is probably referring to a type larger than the ordinary sewing needle that comes to mind, especially as he mentions its being thrown from a distance. Perhaps a bodkin, about the size of an awl, is intended.

bound by the will, and the will is bound by what the intellect says: that this is (to one's) good and is doable.

And the intellect is also compelled, for it is like a mirror in that whatever it knows the form of that appears in it. Since killing is not good, it does not command it and that volition does not appear, except at a time of calamity when one does not have the strength to endure and one considers killing (oneself) better than (living on). Therefore, that which is called a voluntary act is bound to one's welfare, as it appears in one's judgment. If not, when the necessity for this appears, it is like the (involuntary) necessity to breathe and to shut the eyes, and the necessity for that is like the (natural) necessity of sinking in the water.

These causes are interconnected and the rings of the chain of causes are many. We have explained this in *The Revival*. As for the power which has been created in a human being, it is one of the rings of the chain of causes. From this, one supposes that one controls something, but that is pure error. For, its connection to one is nothing more than that one is its locus and a passage for it. As a result, one is the passage for the choice which has been created in one and a passage for the power which has been created in one. So, as a tree—in which power and volition have not been created—moves by cause of a breeze, one has been made their locus by necessity. That is called "pure compulsion." And as the power of God Most High is not constrained by anything external to Him, that is called "invention." Since a human being is neither like this nor like that—because his power and volition are tied to other causes over which he has no control—his act does not resemble an act of God so that it might be called "creation" and invention. And since he is the locus of power and volition that has been created in him by necessity, he is not like a tree so that his act might be called pure compulsion. Rather, it is of another kind and it requires another name: it is called "acquisition." From all of this, it is clear that even though the act of a human being is by his choice, but as he himself is compelled in his choice—whether he wants it or not—consequently, he has no control over anything.

Excursus: [There Is No Inconsistency Amongst the Law, Intellect, and the Unity][1694]

Surely thou wilt say: "It if is thus, why is there spiritual reward and punishment? For what is the Religious Law, if no one has any control over anything?" Know that this is the place at which it is said that God's Unity is in the Law, and the Law is in God's Unity. Many of the weak drown in the midst of this. A person who can walk upon water finds escape from this Destroyer. If he cannot, well, he can swim. Most

[1694] From the AA text.

of the people who have found safety from this are those who did not go out to sea, lest they be drowned. The common folk are among these, but they do not realize it. It is a mercy upon them that they do not cross the shore of this sea, lest they drown suddenly. Most of those who have sailed on the sea of Unity have drowned in it because they did not know how to swim. Perhaps, they also do not have the intelligence to learn, so that, having become deceived by themselves, they do not seek (to learn it) and they drown in this sea. For, nothing is under our control and He does all. That one for whom hardship has been decreed will not change that by striving. That one for whom happiness has been decreed has no need of striving. All of this ignorance and error, and it is the cause of destruction! Learning the true nature of these matters—however much it is not suitable to be written in a book—since the discussion has come this far, a short account will be given here:

Know that (the answer to the question) thou askest: "Why is there spiritual reward and punishment?" is: the punishment is not because thou hast done some evil deed and someone becomes angry at thee and takes revenge upon thee, or is delighted with thee and gives thee a robe of honor as reward. This is far from the Divine Attributes! But if a mixture of blood, or yellow bile, or something else inside thee assaults (thee) and from it something is born which is called "illness," when it is treated with medicine, another state is born which is called "good health." In the same way, when appetite and anger have overcome thee, thou hast become their prisoner. From that, a fire that is thy destruction is born that attacks the soul. For this, the Messenger (S) said: "*Anger is piece of the Fire.*" He said: "It is not anger which thou hast put in charge of thyself, but a tongue of flame." As when the light of intelligence gathers strength, the fire of passion and anger dies out, so the light of thy faith puts out the fire of hell in the same manner, so that it says: "*Pass on, O believer, the light of thy faith is putting out my fire!*" Hell continues to complain about faith and this is not just talk. Rather, (hell) itself does not have the strength to endure the light (of faith) and is routed. As a mosquito is driven away by the wind, the fire of the carnal appetite is driven away by the light of intelligence.

Therefore, nothing else will be brought for thee from some other place. It will be given to thee from thine own (deeds). *It is nothing more than your deeds being returned to you.* Therefore, the seed of the fire of hell is thine anger and carnal appetite, and they are with thee inside thee. If thou knowest the lore of certainty, thou wilt see, as He said: *Nay, would that ye knew (now) with a sure knowledge, for ye will behold hell-fire.* Q. 102:5-6)

So, know that as poison carries a person to sickness and sickness carries (one) to the cemetery, and no anger or revenge is present, sinning and carnality make the soul ill. And that illness becomes one's fire, and

that fire is of the nature of the fire of hell, not of the nature of the fire of this world, by the rule of similarity.[1695] As magnetism draws iron to itself, hell draws the one who is destined for hell to itself, and no anger is present. Know that with respect to spiritual reward, it is the same, the discussion of which would be lengthy. This is the answer to that which thou askedst about the "why" of spiritual reward and punishment.

As for that which thou askedst: "So then, what is the Religious Law and the sending of messengers?" Know that this too is a great force to carry the people by the chain of force to Paradise, as he said: "*Art thou astonished at a people who are lead to the Garden in chains?* They are kept with the bow of force so as not to go to hell." As he said: "*Ye throng into the fire, while I am undertaking to restrain you.*" "Ye are like the moth that throws itself into the flame and I have seized your waists and shall not let you (go into the fire)."

Therefore, know that one of the links of the chain of His sway is the speech of the messengers from which understanding is born so that thou may distinguish the (right) path from the false path. From the intimidation (of the words), fear is born. This knowledge and this fear remove the dust from thy mirror and wash it away from the intellect so that this verdict is reflected in it: that taking the path of the Hereafter is better than that of the world. And from that reflection, the volition to take the path is born. From that volition, the limbs are set in motion because they are subject to it, whether they want to be or not. With that chain, thou art forcibly restrained from hell and carried to Paradise. The similitude of the prophets is the shepherd who has a flock of sheep. On his right, there is a green meadow, and on his left a cave, in which there are many wolves. The shepherd stands beside the cave and shakes his staff so that the sheep, compelled by the fear of the staff, jump back away from the cave and go in the direction of the meadow. This is the meaning of the sending of the messengers.

As for that which thou askest: "If one has been condemned to hardship, what is the benefit of striving?" the words are correct, and from another aspect, void. These words are correct in that they are cause of thy perdition, for the sign that a person has been condemned to hardship is that these words fall upon his soul and he makes no effort, neither sowing nor reaping. The sign that a person has been condemned to death is that when he becomes hungry, the thought occurs in his heart not to eat. He says: "What good is bread to me?" He does not extend his hand to eat and he does not eat until, by necessity, he dies. If he has been condemned to poverty, he says: "Of what use is sowing seed?" so he neither sows nor reaps. And he for whom happiness has been decreed, he

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[1695] "by the rule of similarity" (*mujānasat*): AA has "by the rule of familiarity" (*mu'ānasat*).

has been made aware that wealth and life have been decreed for him. They have been decreed because he has cultivation, business, and consumption. Therefore, this decree is not in vain; rather, it is for (certain) reasons.

Whoever has been created for some work, his means for that are also prepared. It is not that he is delivered to that task without reason. For this, said the Messenger (S): "*Act, for all is made ready for him who is created for it.*" Read the good news about thine outcome from thine acts and states which are imposed upon thee by necessity. When striving and repetition have overcome thee, know that this is good news that shows that the happiness of leadership has been decreed for thee if thou conclude it well. If sloth and idleness had been made to master thee, this would have dropped uselessly into thy soul. Indeed, thou wouldst say: "If I have been condemned to eternity in ignorance, of what use is the repetition of taking pains?" From this, read the mandate of thine ignorance and know that its sign is that thou shalt never attain the degree of leadership. In summary, compare the Hereafter with this world: *Your creation and your raising (from the dead) are only as (that) of a single soul;* (Q. 31:28) *the same in their life and their death?* (Q. 45:21)[1696]

When thou hast come to understand these truths, these three difficulties depart and Unity becomes established. It becomes clear that there is no contradiction amongst the Law, the intellect, and God's Unity for a person whose eye of perception is opened. We shall not prolong this subject, for this book cannot support such words.

Disclosing the Other Belief Upon Which Trust Is Built

Know that we have said that trust is based upon two beliefs: one is the Unity of God, which we have explained; the other is that thou know that the Creator is He and all is His. With all of that, He is Compassionate, Wise, and Kind. His care and mercy with respect to every ant and gnat, not to speak of a human being, is greater than that of a mother for her child, as it has been related in the Traditions. And thou knowest that the universe and all there is in the universe has been created in a manner of perfection, beauty, grace, and wisdom, so that nothing can possibly excel them. And thou knowest that He withheld nothing of His mercy and kindness. Everything that He created, He has created as it must be. If all the intellects of the world were to get together and give free rein to the perfection of their intelligence and cleverness, and consider whether there is a hair-point or a mosquito's wing that is not as

[1696] The full text of Q. 45:21 is: *Or do those who commit ill-deeds suppose that We shall make them as those who believe and do good works, the same in their life and their death?* (Q. 45:21)

it should be, either too small or too large, they will not discover it and they will know that all is as it must be.

As for anything that is ugly, its perfection is that it be ugly. If it were not ugly, it would be deficient and an underlying reason would be lost. For, if He had not created ugliness, for example, a person would not himself know the value of beauty and would not find comfort in that. If it were not deficient, the perfection itself would be deficient and there would be no pleasure for the perfect from its own perfection, because perfection and deficiency can (only) be known relatively. Just as if there were no father, there would be no son, and if there were no son, there would be no father. Such things are in contrast with each other, and a contrast is between two things. When the duality departs and becomes one, that which is the basis of the contrast departs.

Know that it is permissible that the underlying reasons of affairs be hidden from mankind, but there must be faith in (the proposition) that thy welfare lies in that which He has decreed, and that (things) must be as they are. Therefore, there is an underlying reason for the sickness and disability, the sin and unbelief, the destruction and loss, and the pain and sorrow that exist in the world, and it must be as it is. The welfare of him whom He created poor is in poverty, for if he were rich he would have been ruined. It is the same for him whom He created rich. This too is a vast sea, like the sea of God's Unity, and many persons have been drowned in this sea. It is tied to the mystery of destiny that it is not permitted to disclose. If we were to wade into this sea, the discussion would be long; but this is the best part of faith, and trust, too, has need of this.

Disclosing the True Nature of Trust

Know that trust is one of the states of the soul and it is the fruit of the faith in God's Unity and in the perfection of favor. The essence of this state is the confidence of the soul in the Advocate, keeping it strong and taking rest in it so that the soul does not tie itself to livelihood and does become disheartened because of shortcomings in external things. Instead, one has confidence in God, that He will deliver sustenance to him. It is like the spurious claim that is made upon a person fraudulently. He calls an advocate in order to ward off that fraud. If he has faith in the advocate in four qualities, his heart has confidence in the advocate and he is secure:

ONE is that (the advocate) is knowledgeable, with a complete knowledge of the kinds of fraud.

ANOTHER is that he has the complete power to express what he knows with two things: one is with the strength of the soul to be courageous, and the other is with eloquence. For there is the person who

knows, but cannot articulate, either from fear or because of some speech impediment.

THIRD is that he is completely sympathetic to the client, and eager to preserve the truth.

When he has faith in all three[1697] of these, he is secure in his soul and he has confidence in him. He abandons stratagem and management on his own behalf. In the same way, whoever has comprehended and believed in the meaning of this: *How excellent a Lord and how excellent an Advocate!*—that all of whatever exists, exists through God Most High and there is no other Agent, and that in all of this, there is no deficiency in His knowledge and power, and that His mercy and care is such that there cannot be anything beyond that—he is confident of the grace of God Most High and puts aside stratagem and management. He knows that his daily sustenance is predestined and will reach him in its own time and that his affairs have been arranged in a manner worthy of His grace, generosity, greatness, and Lordship. It may be that he is certain of these attributes, but there be some cowardice in his nature that is fearful; for one's nature does not always obey everything that a person knows with certainty. Instead, it may be that it retains its devotion to something which he knows with certainly to be an error, just as when one is eating a sweetmeat and someone likens it to filth, it becomes so that one cannot eat it, even though one knows (that person's words) were a lie. If one wants to sleep alone in a house with a dead body, one cannot, even though one certainly knows that the corpse is still and cannot rise.

So, trust must have both the strength of certainty and the strength of the soul so that anxiety may depart from the soul. So long as one has not obtained that complete tranquillity and confidence, there is no trust. For, the meaning of trust is the soul's confidence in God in affairs. Abraham (A) had total faith and certainty when he said: *Show me how Thou givest life to the dead. He said: Dost Thou not believe? He said: Yea, but (I ask) in order that my heart may be at ease.* (Q. 2:260) He said: "I am certain, but so as to put my heart at ease," for the peace of heart is a follower of the imagination and the senses at the beginning of a state; then, when it reaches the limit, the soul too becomes subservient to certainty and it no longer requires external witnessing.

[1697] The attentive reader will have noted an inconsistency here. Before enumerating the required qualities, Ghazzali declares them to be four, but he only gives three. By a comparison with *The Revival*, it becomes clear that the point called "third" should actually be "fourth." The four qualities (in *The Revival*) are: guidance (*hidāyah*), strength (*qūwah*), eloquence (*faṣāhah*), and compassion (*shafaqah*).

THE DEGREES OF TRUST

Know that there are three degrees of trust:

THE FIRST DEGREE is that one's state be like that of the man in a dispute who takes an advocate: prompt, eloquent, guiding, courageous, and sympathetic, with whom he is secure.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one's state be like that of an infant who, in all that happens to him, knows nothing except his mother. When he is hungry, he calls her. If he is afraid, he clings to her. That is his nature and he does that neither because he is forced, nor through free choice. This is a client who is unaware of his own trust because of his being engrossed in the advocate. However, the first is aware of his trust. Either through constraint or free choice, he has betaken himself to trust.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one's state be that of a corpse before a washer of corpses. One sees oneself as a corpse, moving by Eternal Power, not by the self, just as a corpse moves by the movements of the washer. If something happens to one, one does not supplicate either, not as a child calls its mother. Rather, one is a child who knows that even if he does not call his mother, she knows his condition and will take care of it for him.

So, in the last station there is no free choice. In the second station, there is no free choice except imploring, supplication, and recourse to the Advocate. In the first station, there is free choice, but in the contrivance of means that have been made known by the practice and custom of the Advocate. For example, if one knows that the custom of the Advocate is that he will not argue until one is present and the record is present, one must act according to this practice. Then, all becomes waiting for what the Advocate will do. All that happens, he sees as from the Advocate. He sees the presentation of the record by Him, too, which has been prepared at His direction.

Therefore, a person whose trust is at this station does not refrain from business and agriculture and the external things that have been made known of the practice of God Most High, but as he is also trusting, he does not place confidence in his business and agriculture. Rather, (he puts it) in the grace of God Most High to deliver this business and agriculture to its desired end. As He has given over the activities and means of business to him, and as He gives the guidance of that to him, he does these things and sees whatever he sees as though it were from God, as it has been explained.

(The declaration that) *There is no might and no strength save in God* is this: the might is movement and the strength is power. When one knows that both his movement and power are not in him, but in his Creator, everything he sees, he sees as from Him. Finally, when the

transfer of acts to causes has been outside of his purview, so that he sees nothing save God Most High, he is one who trusts.

However, the most exalted of its stations is that which Bayazid has said, as related by Abu Musa Daylami:[1698] "I asked (Bayazid): 'What is trust?' He said: 'What dost thou say?' I said: 'The shaykhs have said that it is that to the left and the right are all snakes and dragons and the inner essence of thy soul does not stir.' (Bayazid) said: 'That is easy. But, if one sees all the inhabitants of hell in torment and all the inhabitants of heaven in comfort, and one makes a distinction between them in (one's) soul, one is not trusting.'" But that which Abu Musa says was the highest of the degrees and stations of trusting; its prerequisite is that one not shun. The Truly Righteous One[1699] (R) put his heel in the hole of a snake while he was in the cave and he was trusting, but not afraid of the snake. Rather, (he was afraid) of the Creator Who gives the snake strength and movement, so that he sees *There is no might and no strength save in God* with respect to it. As for that which Bayazid has said, he was referring to that faith which is the basis of trust, and that faith is dearer. That faith is in justice, wisdom, grace, and mercy. For one knows that whatever He does, He does it as it must be done. Therefore, in this, one makes no difference between torment and ease.

Disclosing the Acts of Trust

Know that all of the stations of religion turn on three elements: knowledge, state, and act. Now, the knowledge and state of trust has been explained, and the act remains. Perhaps a person imagines that the prerequisite of trust is that he leave all affairs to God Most High and not do anything by his own free choice altogether, so that he does not earn, does not put aside anything for tomorrow, and does not flee wolves, snakes, lions, and scorpions. If he becomes sick, he does not take medicine. All of this is a mistake, for all of these (acts) are against the (Religious) Law. However, the Law has lauded trust, so how could it be contrary to the Law?

Indeed, human choice is in obtaining some wealth that he does not have, or in preserving that which he has, or in fending off a loss that has not (yet) occurred, or in removing of a loss that has occurred. Trust in each one of these has a different rule, and it is certainly necessary to explain these four stations:

[1698] Mūsā Daylamī: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1699] "the Truly Righteous One" (*Siddīq*): Abu Bakr, see Note 456.

THE FIRST STATION: CONCERNING EARNING AND ACQUIRING BENEFIT

It has three degrees:

THE FIRST is a cause that we have learned from the practice of God Most High without which absolutely no act occurs and refraining from it is madness, not trust; as when a person does not reach for food and does not place it in his mouth so that God Most High may satiate him without food; or so that He may give movement to the food so that it will go into his mouth; or that a person marry and not engage in intercourse so that God may create a child without that. He supposes that this is trust, but it is foolishness. Indeed, trust in any absolute cause is not with act and deed. Rather, it is according to knowledge and state.

As for knowledge, it is that one know that God Most High has created hands, food, power, movement, mouth, and teeth—all of them. As for state, it is that the confidence of one's soul be in God Most High and His grace, not in the food and the hand. For, it may happen that a hand become paralyzed and a person receive food from another. So, one's sight must be (fixed) on His grace in the creation of those and in their preservation, not in his own might and strength.

AT THE SECOND DEGREE are the causes which are not absolute, but without which one usually cannot achieve one's purpose—it is but rarely possible that one achieve it without them—such as taking the provisions for a journey. Here, too, refraining is not a condition of trust, for (taking provisions for a journey) was the Practice of the Messenger (S) and the behavior of the forefathers. But, being trusting is that one does not put the confidence of one's soul upon the provisions, for it may happen that the provisions are carried away. Rather, one places one's confidence in the Creator and the Watcher. Yet, if one goes into the desert without provisions, it is permissible, and out of the perfection of trust; unlike not eating food, for there is no trust in that. However, this is permissible for a person who has two qualities: one is that he has acquired sufficient strength that, if he must remain hungry for a week, he would be able to do so. The other is that he would be able to keep alive by eating plants for a time. If it is thus, usually the countryside is not devoid of that until the time when food appears from some unexpected place.

Ibrahim Khawwas[1700] was one of the trusting and had this character. He would go to the desert without provisions, although he would take needle, nail scissors, rope, and a bucket, as these are

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[1700] Ibrahim Khawwas: Ibrāhīm bin Aḥmad bin Ismāʿīl al-Khawwāṣ, Abū Isḥāq. Anecdotes about him are numerous in Qushayri's *Risalah*. Hujwiri devotes a chapter to him, stating that he had attained a high degree of trust (*tawakkul*). ʿAttar also leads off his section on the recent great shaykhs with him.

necessary equipment. Water cannot be drawn from a well without a rope and bucket, and there are no buckets or ropes in the desert. When clothing is torn, there is nothing except a needle to sew it up. Therefore, trust concerning such equipment does not lie in abandoning it. Rather, it is with putting one's confidence in the grace of God Most High, not in (the equipment).

So, if a person sits in a cave where people do not pass by and where there are no plants and says: "I trust (in God)," this is forbidden and he may have condemned himself to death. He has not learned the practice of God Most High, for it is like the trust in a legal dispute, when does not bring the record to the advocate while knowing (the advocate's) rule that he will not speak without the record.

One of the ascetics in bygone times went out of a city and sat in a cave and trusted that his sustenance would reach him. A week passed and nothing had appeared. He grew weak and was near death. Revelation came to the messenger of that time: "Say to him that the King Most High says: 'By My Might, I shall not give thee sustenance so long as thou dost not return to the city and sit amongst men.'" When he returned to the city, they began to bring him things from all sides. Something occurred in the soul of the ascetic. Revelation came to the messenger of that time: "Say to him: 'Thou didst desire to nullify My judgment with thine asceticism. Didst thou not know that I prefer giving the sustenance of My servants by the hands of others of My servants over giving it by My Own hand?"

The same for a person who hides in his house in a city and closes the door and trusts (in God). This is forbidden, for it is not proper that thou detach thyself completely from the way of definite causes. However, when he does not close the door and sits in trust, it is lawful, with the condition that all of his expectation not be with the door (in the hope) that someone will bring something. All of his soul should not be with people; rather he should keep his soul with God and engage in worship and truly recognize that if he had not detached himself completely the way of causes, he would not be deprived of sustenance.

Here what has been said becomes correct: "If a servant of God flees from his sustenance, his sustenance will seek him out." If one asks of God Most High to give him his sustenance, He says: "O ignoramus! I have created thee, would I not give (thee) sustenance?" This will never be! Therefore, trust is in that which does not arise from the way of causes. Then, one does not see sustenance as from the causes; one sees it as being from the Causer of all Causes. For, mankind all eat the sustenance of God, but some with the degradation of begging; some with sorrow and expectation, such as the businessmen; some with enduring effort and hardship, such as the craftsmen; and some with honor and ease, such as the Sufis who have their eyes fixed upon God. They accept

that which comes to them from God, and they do not see the people in between.

THE THIRD DEGREE is of the causes that are not absolute, nor are they usually needed. Rather, they are considered to be among the stratagems and deep enquiries. Their relationship to earning is like the relationship of cauterization, spells, and auguries to an illness. The Messenger (S) has described those who trust as (those who) do not cast spells and cauterize, not that they do not earn and leave the cities for the deserts.

Therefore, in this station there are three levels of trust:

The first (level) is the degree of the elite, those who go about the desert without provisions. This is the highest. This is because there is the strength to be hungry for five or six days, or to eat plants. If one does not find (these), he does not fear death. He knows that his welfare is in that; for it is possible that the provisions of a person who takes them with him may be taken from him and he may die. There is always the rare possibility (of such an event) on the road, but being wary of that is not an obligation.

The second level is that one does not do business, but also does not go to the desert. Instead, one stays in the city in a mosque, and holds no expectation from people. Instead, (sustenance is) from the kindness and artifice of God Most High.

The third level is that one goes out to earn money, but does so according to rule and the practice of the Law. As we have said in the chapter concerning Earning in this work.[1701] One is wary of subtle, crafty and tortuous hairsplitting, deceit, and expediencies in the pursuit of his sustenance. If he does become occupied with such means, he is in the degree of a person who casts spells and cauterizes, but he is not trusting.

The proof that refraining from earning is not a prerequisite of trust is that (Abu Bakr) Siddiq was one of the trusting and in this degree he was not denied any state. When he accepted the caliphate, he picked up a bundle of clothes and went to the market to trade. He was asked: "Why dost thou do this in (thy) caliphate?" He answered: "Then, if I leave my own family to perish, I will leave others to perish more speedily." So, they made provision for him from the public treasury. Then he gave all of his time to the caliphate. Therefore, his trust was that he was not eager for wealth, and that which he used to receive, he did not think of as from his own sufficiency and capital, rather he thought of it as from God Most High. He did not love his own property more than the property of other Muslims.

[1701] Chapter Three of the Second Pillar.

In short, trust without asceticism is not correct. Therefore, asceticism is a condition of trust, even though trust is not a condition of asceticism. Abu Hafs Haddad[1702] was the spiritual master of Junayd and was one of the trusting. He said: "I kept my trust concealed for twenty years. I would earn a dinar every day in the market. I would not go to the public bath for a single karat[1703] of that. Instead, I would give it all away as charity." Junayd would not say anything about trust in his presence. He used to say: "I am ashamed to talk of a station which is his station in front of him."

However, the trust of Sufis who sit in a place while the servant goes out is weak, just as the trust of a person who engages in trade. There are many conditions for this so that trust may become correct together with that. But, if they sit in the expectation of favors from unknown sources, that is closer to trust. However, when the place has become well known, it is like a market; and it is feared that the tranquillity of the soul will be with that (notoriety). Yet, if the soul pays no attention to it, it is the same as the trust of one who earns.

The principle is that one should not have expectations of people, nor confidence in any agency other than the Causer of Causes. Khawwas says: "I saw Khidr and he was agreeable to my companionship, but I passed him over, lest my soul have confidence in him and become complacent. My trust would be defective." Ahmad Hanbal hired a laborer. He ordered one of his students to give something in addition to (the laborer's) hire. The laborer would not accept it. When he left, Ahmad said: "Take it and go after him. Perhaps he will accept it." (The student) asked: "Why?" (Ahmad) said: "At that time, he saw the greed for it in himself and did not accept it because of that. When that the greed has departed, he would accept it."

In short, the trust of the earner is that his confidence not be in his capital. The sign of this is that if (his earnings) are stolen, his heart does not change and hopelessness about his sustenance does not appear, because he considers his confidence to be in the grace of God Who will deliver his sustenance from some unexpected place. If He does not, his welfare lay in that.

The Remedy for Acquiring This State

Know that this is an extremely uncommon state: that the soul of a person is not shaken when his goods are stolen causing loss. However, even though it is uncommon and rare, it is not impossible. It comes with the obtaining of faith and certainty in the perfection of (His) grace and

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[1702] Abū Ḥafṣ Ḥaddād: al-Nīshābūrī, died AH264/877-8CE.
[1703] "karat" (*qīrāt*): a 24th part; a weight of 3.3 grains.

mercy and the perfection of (His) power so that one knows that He gives sustenance to many persons who have no capital when a vast amount of capital would be the cause of the destruction of such people. The Messenger (S) said: "There is the servant of God who at night meditates some act in which his destruction lies. God Most High from His Canopy above looks down upon him with the gaze of care and turns that (thought) from him, so that in the morning, he rises gloomy. He is suspicious as to who did that and why. (He suspects) that this is some assault that such-and-such a neighbor has made; yet it was itself the mercy of God Most High that had come upon him." It was for this that 'Umar Khattab (R) used to say: "I have no fear as to whether I shall rise in the morning a poor man or a rich man, for I do not know in which my welfare lies."

Also, one must know that the suspicion and fear of poverty is the inspiration of Satan: *Satan promises you destitution and enjoins upon you lewdness.* (Q. 2:268) In such a state, confidence in the favor of God is the perfection of spiritual insight, especially when one has learned that sustenance is from hidden resources with no one can fathom. In sum, one also does not place confidence in hidden resources. Instead, one does so in the guarantee of the Lord of resources. There was a worshipper in a mosque. The imam of the mosque said several times: "Thou possessest nothing. If thou engaged in some business, it would be better for thee." He replied: "A Jew in this neighborhood has guaranteed that he will deliver two round cakes to me every day." (The imam) said: "If that is the case, now it is lawful if thou dost not engage in business." He said: "O young man, it would indeed be better if thou didst not perform the office of the imam, for the guarantee of a Jew is to thee stronger than the guarantee of God Most High."

The imam of a congregation said to one of the congregation: "Whence dost thou obtain thy food?" (The man) replied: "Wait until I repeat the noon obligatory prayer which I have just prayed behind thee." That is: Thou hast no faith in the guarantee of God Most High. People who have tested this have seen sustenance from unexpected places. Their faith in the verse: *And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof dependeth upon God,* (Q. 11:6) has been confirmed.

Hudhayfah Mar'ashi was asked: "What was the most remarkable thing thou sawest about Ibrahim Adham, whom thou didst serve?" He answered: "We suffered hunger on the way to Makkah. When we reached Kufah, its effect on me was obvious. He said: 'Hast thou become weak from hunger?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'Bring an inkpot and paper.' I did so and he wrote: '*In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.* O Thou Who art the aim of all states and Thou to Whom all points, I am full of praise, grateful, and a rememberer, but I am hungry, thirsty, and naked. I am the guarantor of the three who are my portion. Be Thou the guarantor of the three who are Thy portion.' He handed me

the note and said: 'Go out and do not give thy heart to anyone except God Most High, and give this to the first person thou seest.' I came outside and saw someone sitting on a camel. I gave the note to him. He read it and wept, saying: 'Where is the writer of the note?' I said: 'In the mosque.' He gave me a purse of gold containing 600 dinars. I asked someone who that man was. I was told that he was a Christian. I brought the gold to Ibrahim and related the story. He said: 'Do not touch that gold, for its owner will come right now.' The Christian immediately came and fell at (Ibrahim's) foot and kissed him and became a Muslim."

Abu Ya'qub Basri[1704] says: I remained hungry in the Sanctuary for ten days. I became very weak. I came out and saw a turnip that had been thrown down. I said (to myself): 'Let me pick that up.' One would say that there was a cry from inside me: 'Ten days of hunger! Finally, thy portion is a rotten turnip!' I withheld my hand and I returned to the mosque. Someone came in and placed a box of sweet cakes, sugar, and shelled almonds before me. He said: 'We were on the sea and a gale came. We vowed that if we escaped safely, we would give this box to the first poor person we saw.' I took a handful from each one and said: 'I give the rest to thee.' I said to myself: 'The gale was ordered in the midst of the sea so as to prepare thy sustenance, and thou seekest it from some other place?'" Thus, getting to know the likes of these prodigies strengthens faith.

Disclosing the Trust of the Family Man

Know that the family man is not free to go from door to valley and refrain from the matters of trade because he is entrusted with a family. Rather, the trust of the family man is nothing other than the third degree, and that is the trust of the businessman, as (Abu Bakr) Siddiq did, because trust is certain in two senses: one is that one can endure hunger and be content with all there may be, even plants. The other is that one has the belief that one's sustenance may be hunger and death, and one's welfare may lie in that. But (a man) cannot keep his family in this fashion. Moreover, in reality, his self too is (part of) his family. If they do not have the strength to endure hunger and will become agitated, trust by the abandonment of earning is not appropriate for him. If the household, too, has the strength to endure and is agreeable to trust, still abandoning earning is not permissible. Therefore, the difference is not more than this: that keeping oneself hungry by force is permissible, but (keeping) the members of the household hungry (by force) is not.

[1704] Abū Yaᶜqūb Basrī: Abū Yaᶜqūb Aqtaᶜ Baṣrī. According to Hujwiri and 'Attar, he was a supporter of Husayn Hallaj (see Note 1685). Qushayri relates the same story about him that Ghazzali cites.

If a person has a complete faith and is occupied with piety, even though he does not earn, the means of his sustenance are apparent. Just as an infant in the womb is helpless to earn, He delivers his sustenance by way of the navel. When he comes out of the mother, He delivers it from the mother's breast. When he can eat food, teeth are created at the proper time. If the mother and father die, he is left an orphan. Just as He had charged the mother with tenderness so that he would be well taken care of, He charges others with tenderness so that mercy for the orphan appears in the hearts of the people. Before this, the tenderness was from one, and others left it to her. When the mother died, He kindled tenderness in a hundred thousand people. When he had grown up, He gave him the power to earn his living. He appointed the compulsion for that over him so that he may take care of himself with a tenderness which is appointed for him, just as his mother took care of him with her own tenderness. If this compulsion is taken back from him, so that he becomes an orphan from his earning and turns to piety, He fills all hearts with his tenderness, so that all say: "This man is busy with God; he must be given whatever is better and finer." Before this, he alone was sympathetic to himself. Now, all the people are become sympathetic to him, just as to an orphan. But, if he can earn a living and he busies himself with uselessness and indolence, this sympathy will not appear in hearts. For him, the abandonment of earning is not permissible. As he is occupied with himself, he should take care of himself. If he turns to God and becomes an orphan from himself, then God makes (their) hearts sympathetic and merciful towards him. For this reason, no pious person is ever seen who has died from hunger.

Therefore, whoever looks into this firm management, how the Lord of the kingdom has arranged the affairs of the kingdom and (His) dominion, and how perfectly He has established it, he necessarily remarks this verse (wherein) He says: *And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof dependeth upon God.* (Q. 11:6) He knows that He has made the kingdom so beautiful and so well arranged that there is loss for no one—except rarely—and that is because his welfare lay in that. It is not because he has refrained from earning. It is also rare that one who has acquired a lot of wealth becomes lost and ruined.

Hasan Basri, who observed this state, said: "I desire that all Basrah would be my family and that a grain of wheat would cost a dinar." Wuhayb bin al-Ward said: "If the sky becomes iron and the earth becomes brass and I worry about my own sustenance, I fear that I would be a polytheist." God Most High transferred sustenance to the sky so that it would be known that no one could touch it. A group went to Junayd and asked: "Should we seek our sustenance?' He answered: "If ye know where to look for it." They said: "Should we desire sustenance from

God?" He replied: "If ye know which one of you He has forgotten, remind Him." They asked: "Should we trust and watch to see what happens by itself?" He said: "Trust with testing is doubt." They said: "What is the stratagem?" He said: "Refraining from stratagem." So, in reality the guarantee of sustenance is sufficiency. Whoever has taken Him as guarantor, must turn toward Him.

(The Second Station) Concerning Trust in Keeping and Storing

Know that whoever lays up for himself a supply (of sustenance) adequate for a year has fallen from (the state of) trust, for he has not consigned (anything) to way of hidden means and has placed his confidence in external means that will be repeated every year. However, he who is content with the necessity of the moment, with food in the quantity that will sate him and clothing in the amount that he wears—he has been faithful to trust. But, if one stores up the quantity (needed) for forty days, Khawwas says: "Trust is not nullified by that, unless he exceeds it." But Sahl Tustari says: "Hoarding nullifies trust, however much it may be." Abu Talib Makki says: "If it exceeds forty days, trust is not nullified so long as one does not put one's confidence in the stores." Husayn Mughazili was one of he disciples of Bishr. He said: "One day a middle-aged man came to Bishr. Bishr gave me a handful of silver and told me to buy some good and tasty food. I had never heard such a thing from him. I brought the food and he ate it with him. I had never seen him eat anything with another person. When they had eaten, much food was left over. That middle-aged man gathered it up, picked it up and departed. I was astonished that he had done so without permission. Bishr said: 'Art thou astonished?' I said that I was. He said: 'That was Fath Mawsili. He had come today from Mawsil[1705] to visit me. He took the food to teach us that if trust is correct, storing does no harm.'"

Therefore, the truth of the matter is that the root of trust is minimal hope, and the rule is that one should not hoard for oneself. So, if one does so, but one considers the property one has as though it were in the treasury of God Most High and one does not place one's confidence it, trust is not voided. What we have said is relative to a single man. However, if a family man stores (enough) for a year, his trust is not voided, unless (the stored supplies) be in excess (of that). The Messenger (S) used to lay up (supplies) for a year for his household because of their faintheartedness, but nothing for himself from dawn to mid-morning. And if he did, it had no deleterious effect on his trust. Its being in his

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[1705] Mawṣil: a city in northern Iraq on the Tigris River. The English spelling is usually Mosul. The English word "muslin," a kind of cloth, derives from its name.

own hand or the hand of another near him were both the same to him, but he taught the people according to their weakness.

In the Traditions, it is related that one of the Companions of the Bench[1706] received the command.[1707] Two dinars were found in his clothes. The Messenger (S) said: "Two marks."[1708] This has two possible (interpretations): One is that he had deceitfully pretended to being single. This would be two marks of fire as punishment. The other is that he had not been deceptive, but had hoarded; and this would be loss of degree in the next world, just as the sign of the two marks on him detracts from beauty. With respect to another poor man about whom, when he received the command, (the Messenger) said: "He will come on the Day of Resurrection like the full moon. Except for one trait, he would have been like the sun: he had laid up a winter garment for the next winter and a summer garment for the next summer." And he said: "Ye have been given nothing less than certainty and patience." That is, laying up clothing is a defect in certainty. However, it is not wrong to store such things in common use such as jugs, tablecloths, and ewers; that is lawful. The Law of God refers to the appearance each year of bread and clothing from a different quarter, but these household utensils do not appear renewed at just any time and it is not right to oppose its practice. However, summer clothing in winter has no use; keeping it at that time is a weakness in certainty.

Excursus: [For Whom Is Storing Up Better?][1709]

Know that if a person is such that if he does not lay up stores his soul will be troubled and he will have expectations of people, it is better that he (lay them up). Indeed, if it is thus: that his soul would not be at ease and he would not engage in remembrance (of God) and mediation, except when he has some property from which he derives his sustenance,

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[1706] "the Companions of the Bench" (*ashāb-i suffah*), also referred to as the People of the Bench (*ahl-i suffah*): They were the poor strangers, without friends or homes, who were accustomed to sit on the bench (or raised plinth) in front of the mosque. Lane describes it as a covered portico; the Arabic word suggests a ledge or a mud-brick platform of the kind one still sees in front of houses in the villages of Egypt. The Prophet would invite some of them to share his meals and send others to his Companions. Their number is given by different sources as up to 400. Hujwiri lists 34 names, including those of Salman the Persian, Abu Dharr, and Abu Darda. As they were credited with asceticism, some have suggested that the term Sufism originates from the imitation of their practices, although for linguistic reasons, this derivation is unlikely. Western scholars, as represented by the article in the EI, are rather skeptical about the story.

[1707] "received the command": died.

[1708] : "two marks (*dāgh*)": *dāgh* can refer to a mark, scar, spot, freckle, blemish, cautery, tattoo, the mark of a brand, etc. The mark on the foreheads of many Muslims from frequent and energetic prostration is also called a *dāgh*.

[1709] From the AA text.

it is better for him that he keep property in the amount of his sustenance. The object of all this is the soul, so that it may be immersed in the remembrance of God Most High. Some souls are thus: that the existence of wealth keeps them occupied (with it) while they are calm in poverty. This is nobler. But some, without the amount of (necessary) sustenance (on hand), do not become at ease. For such a person, property is better. However, if (the soul) is not at ease without excess and luxury, it is not from among the souls of the religious. This itself is not taken into account.

The Third Station Is Recognizing the Means of Repelling Loss

Know that abandoning any means that is necessary or usual is not a condition of trust. Indeed, if one who trusts closes the door of his house and puts a lock on it so that a thief not steal his goods, his state of trust is not invalidated. If one takes up a weapon and is wary of an opponent, it is the same. If one takes a cloak so that one not be cold on the way, it is the same. If one eats garlic, for example, so that internal heat reduce the effect of the cold on the road, such fine means are incompatible with trust, like cauterization and spells; but refraining from those things which are obvious means (of well-being) is not a condition (of trusting in God).

A desert Arab came to the Messenger. The Messenger (S) asked: "O Arab, what didst thou do with thy camel?" He answered: "I left it and put my trust (in God)." (The Messenger) said: "Tie it up and trust (in God)." But, if some trouble afflicts a person, enduring and not fighting it is a part of trust, as God Most High said: *Disregard their noxious talk and put thy trust in God.* (Q. 33:48) And He said: *We shall surely endure that hurt ye do to us. Let the trusting put their trust in God.* (Q. 14:12) However, enduring the affliction of snakes, scorpions, and predators is not right. One must ward them off.

Therefore, the trust of whoever takes up a weapon in caution against an enemy is that his confidence is not in the strength of the weapon, just as when one places a lock on his door, one's confidence is not in the lock, for there are many locks that cannot stop a thief. The sign of trusting is that if one comes home and his goods have been stolen, he is content with the demands of God Most High and is not grieved. Instead, when he comes out, he says with his demeanor: "I do not put on locks in order to ward off Thy decree, but I do so in agreement with Thy Law. O Lord God, if Thou dost set someone else over this wealth, I am content with Thy command. For, I do not know whether Thou hast created this for the sustenance of another and Thou hast entrusted it to me as a loan, or whether Thou hast created it for me."

So, if (a person) returns home and does not see his goods and becomes grieved, the benefit for him is that he learns that his trust is not sound and it was a self-deception. However, if he is silent and does not complain, at least he has obtained a degree of patience. If he begins to complain and searches for the thief diligently, he has also fallen from the degree of patience and has learned that he is neither one of the patient, nor is he one of the trusting, so that at least he puts aside that claim. This is a total benefit that comes from the thief.

QUESTION: If a person says were he not in need, he would not close the door and not protect (his property). If he keeps it out of need and it is stolen, how is it possible that he would not be grieved?

THE ANSWER is that it becomes possible that since God Most High had given it to him, he supposed that his welfare lay in his possessing it, and the sign of that welfare was that God Most High had given it to him. But now, his welfare lies in that he not possess it, and the sign of that welfare is that it was taken from him. Consequently, he rejoices for his welfare in both situations and he believes that God Most High does not do this with respect to him except that it be for his own good. He himself does not know the face of his own welfare; God knows better. Like the sick person who has a compassionate father who is a physician, if (his father) gives him food and meat, he rejoices and says: "If he had not seen the signs of physical well-being (in me), he would not have given (that) to me." If (the father) withholds meat from him, he rejoices and says: "If it were not that he knew that there is harm in that for my body, he would not have withheld it."[1710] So long as there is not this faith, trust does not become sound and a discussion is groundless.

[THE RULES OF CONDUCT FOR ONE WHO TRUSTS IN GOD WHEN HIS GOODS ARE STOLEN]

Know that the one who trusts should observe six rules of conduct:

ONE (RULE) is that even though one closes the door, one does not investigate strenuously and set many fastenings. One does not ask the neighbors to patrol; rather, one is relaxed. Malik bin Dinar used to tie the door of his house with a rope and would say: "If it were not because of the dog, I would not tie it with a rope."

[1710] It was generally considered that meat and rich food was harmful for a sick person. If the physician father gave his son such food, it would mean that the father believed his son to be in good health. The father's withholding it would be an indication that he believed his son to be ill and consequently the food injurious to his son's health.

THE SECOND RULE is that whatever one knows to be valuable and which a thief would crave should not be kept at home, for that would encourage the thief in sinning. Mughirah[1711] sent a jug of water to Malik bin Dinar. After that, Malik sent someone (to Mughirah): "Come and take it back, for Satan has thrown an insinuation in my heart that a thief may come and steal the jug." He did not want to have such suspicions nor (did he want) the thief to fall into sin. When Abu Sulayman Darani heard that, he said: "This is from the weakheartedness of the Sufis. He is an ascetic in the world; what has he to do with a thief's stealing?" This opinion is more complete.

THE THIRD RULE is that when one comes out, one declares an intention that if some (property) be taken by a thief, it is lawful (to him) if he is poor and in need. If (the person robbed) is rich, (he declares it lawful for the thief) so that (the thief) would not (need to) steal another's property. His property is a sacrifice for the property of other Muslims. This is a mercy both for the thief and for other Muslims. He knows that, by this intention, the decree of God Most High will not be changed, and he will also receive the spiritual reward of giving charity seven-hundredfold, whether he is robbed or not, for he has made the intention for good, as it is related in the Traditions that a person when lying with his wife should not perform *coitus interruptus*, but plant the seed. Whether a child comes or not, for him is recorded the reward of a son who will fight in the way of God Most High to be killed and acquire the spiritual reward of the martyrs for him. This is because he did what he was required to do. If there were a child, its creation and life would not be his, but his spiritual reward would be according to his deed.[1712]

THE FOURTH RULE is that one not grieve and know that one's welfare lies in (the property's) being stolen. If one has said: "I have charged it to the Way of God Most High," one should not look for it. If it should be returned, he should not accept it. If he takes it back, it becomes his property, for one does not forfeit the (the right of) ownership merely by the utterance of an intention. Nonetheless, this (total abandonment) is commended in the station of trust. A camel was stolen from Ibn 'Umar. He was active (in looking for it) until he had exhausted himself. Then, he said: "(Let it be) in the Way of God," and went to the mosque. He performed formal prayer. Someone came in, (saying): "The camel is in

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[1711] Mughirah: possibly Mughirah bin Sa'id al-'Ijli (d. AH119/737CE). He was a Kufan libertine and a eulogizer of wine.

[1712] That is, he had fulfilled his duty by completing the intercourse. The creation of the child and its life were not up to him, but rather to God. However, he would obtain his spiritual reward for attempt. In my copy of *The Revival*, there is a note stating that the editor could not find the source of this Tradition.

such-and-such a place." (Ibn 'Umar) put on his footgear and then said: "*I seek refuge with God!*"[1713] He sat down and said: "I had said that (I had surrendered my right to it) in the Way of God! I shall not go after it now."

One of the shaykhs says: "In a dream, I saw a brother in Paradise, but he was sad. I asked: 'Why art thou sad in Paradise?' He answered: 'This sadness will stay with me until the Day of Resurrection because I was shown the greatest stations on High, which are not in all of Paradise. I was delighted. When I headed toward that, a cry came: 'Turn him back for this is for a person who has pursued the way.' I said: 'What is pursuing the way?' He said: 'Thou saidst that some thing was in the way of God, then thou didst not follow through. If thou hadst completed that, all of this would have been given thee.'"

In Makkah, a person woke up from sleep. He had had a purse containing gold. He did not find it. One of the great among the devout was there and he was accused. He was taken to a room. He asked: "How much gold was there?" He gave (the man) as much gold as he said. When (the first) went out, he heard that one of his comrades had taken his purse as a joke. He returned and brought the gold the devotee had given him. However much (the first) pleaded, (the devotee) would not accept it, saying: "I have consigned it to the way of God Most High." In the end, (the first man) ordered that it be distributed among the poor. In the same way, if a person brings bread to give to a poor person and he has gone away, the forefathers disliked that it be brought back home and eaten (there). It had to be given to another poor person.

THE FIFTH RULE is that one not supplicate God for evil to befall the thief or an oppressor; for by that, both trust and asceticism are nullified. Whoever grieves for the past is not an ascetic. A horse worth several thousand dirhams was stolen from Rabi' Khaytham.[1714] He said: "I was watching them steal it." He was asked: "Why didst thou allow them?" He replied: "I was doing something that I liked better: I was performing formal prayer." They supplicated to God that evil to befall (the thief). (Rabi') said: "Do not do that, for I have made it lawful for him and have given it to him as charity." Someone was told: "Supplicate for evil to befall the oppressor." He said: "He has oppressed himself, not me. Let that evil suffice for him. I cannot increase it upon him." In the Traditions, it is related: "The servant of God supplicates for evil to befall

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[1713] *"I seek refuge with God!"* (*astaghfir allāh!*): Among the many uses among Muslims of this very common ejaculation, one of the most common is after one has unwittingly committed a mistake. Ibn 'Umar's first response after hearing that his camel had been found was to go to get it, but then he remembered that he had handed it over in the way of God and it was no longer his, and so he gave it up.

[1714] Rabi' Khaytham: See Rabi' Khuthaym.

the oppressor and speaks ill of him until his claim (of retribution against him) is redeemed. It may happen that nothing remains for the oppressor (to be punished for)."[1715]

THE SIXTH RULE is that one should become sorrowful for the thief and have mercy for him, for he has committed a sin and he will be trapped in its punishment. One is grateful that one is oppressed and not an oppressor, and that the loss was of property, not of faith. If sorrow for the person who has considered a sin lawful does not occupy his soul, he has withheld counsel and compassion from mankind. Fudayl 'Iyad saw a boy stealing some of his goods. He wept. (Someone) asked him: "Art thou weeping for the goods?" He said: "No, for the wretch who did such a thing. On the Day of Resurrection, he will have no excuse."

THE FOURTH STATION: CONCERNING THE CURE OF THE ILLNESS AND THE REMOVAL OF THE HARM WHICH COMES FROM IT

Know that the cure is in three steps:

ONE is definite, as the cure for hunger is bread and the cure for thirst is water and the cure for fire that strikes a place is that thou pourest water on it. Refraining from these is not trust. Instead, it is forbidden (not to act).

THE SECOND is not definite, nor is it conjectural, except for that which is conjectural, such as auguries, cauterizations, and spells. The condition of trust is refraining from those (activities)—as is related in the Traditions—for, performing them is the sign of deep enquiry into means and putting confidence in them. The strongest of these is cauterization, then spells, and the weakest is taking auguries, which are called bad omens

THE THIRD STEP is between both steps, that which is not definite, but usually conjectural, such as venisection, cupping, taking purgatives, and treating heat with cold and cold with heat. Refraining from these is not unlawful, nor is it a condition of trust. It may be that, in some circumstances, doing them is preferred to not doing them. The proof that abandoning them is not a condition of trust is the words of the Messenger (S) and his deeds.

As for his words: he said: "O servants of God, use medicine." And he said: "There is no illness for which there is no medicine save death. But it may be that it is not known or that it is known." He was asked: "Do medicine and spells change the decree of God?" He

[1715] That is, by his supplications and speaking ill of the oppressor, he is taking revenge against him. It may happen that by these means he will erase the obligation due the injured party at the Resurrection when all accounts are cleared.

answered: "These, too, are part of the divine decree." And he said: "I did not pass any group of angels on the night of the Night Journey that did not tell me to command my people to cupping." And he said: "Cup on the 17th, the 19th, and the 21st of the month, lest (your) blood destroy you." And he said: "By the command of God Most High, blood is a cause of death. There is no difference between expelling blood from the body, a snake from clothing, or from putting out a fire in a house. All of these are causes of destruction, and refraining from this is not a condition of trust (in God)." And he said: "Cupping on Tuesday the 17th of a month prevents a year's illness." This was related in an interrupted Tradition.[1716] He ordered venisection for Sa'd Mu'adh. 'Ali (R) had a sore eye. He said: "Do not eat this"—meaning dates—"but eat this!"—meaning turnip leaves with cooked barley pottage. He said to Suhayb (R): "Art thou eating dates with an eye ache?" (Suhayb) said: "I am eating with the other side of my mouth." The Messenger laughed.

As for his deeds: he would apply collyrium to his eyes every night and be cupped every month and take medicine every year. When revelation came and his head ached, he would apply henna to it. When some place (on his body) was wounded, he would apply henna to it and sometimes put earth on it. There are many of these and the have been collected in a book called *The Medical Practice of the Prophet.*

Moses (A) fell sick. The Children of Israel said: "The remedy for that is in such-and-such a thing." He said: "I will use no medicine so that He may send good health." He took no medication for that illness. They said: "It is a medicine well known, proven, and (the illness) will vanish instantly." He said: "I want the sickness to remain." Revelation came: "By My Might, I shall not send thee good health until thou takest the medicine." He took the medicine and became better, (but) something had befallen in his soul. Revelation came: "Didst thou desire to nullify My Wisdom with thine own trust? Who placed the benefit in the medicine other than I?" One of the prophets complained of his weakness: revelation came: "Eat meat and drink milk." Some people lamented the ugliness of their offspring to the messenger of the time. Revelation came: "Inform their women to eat quinces during their pregnancy." They ate them and their children became fine. After that, they would eat quinces during their pregnancies and, at the time of childbirth, ripe dates.

Thus, from all of this it is clear that medicine is a cause of cure, just as bread and water are causes of satiety. All is by the contrivance of the Causer of Causes. In the Traditions, it is related: "Moses (A) said: 'O Lord, from whom is sickness and from whom is healing?' He said: 'Both are from Me.' (Moses) asked: 'Then what is the use of a physician?' He

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[1716] "interrupted (*munqati'*) Tradition": A Tradition, the chain of narrators of which is interrupted. Usually, it means that the link in the second generation, the Followers (*tābi'īn*), is missing.

answered: 'To eat of My sustenance and to please the souls of My servants.'" So, in this, too, trust is with both knowledge and the state that puts confidence in the Creator of the medicine, not in the medicine; for many have taken medicine and died.

EXCURSUS: (WHY CAUTERIZATION IS PROHIBITED)

Know that cauterization is a custom for some people, but they fall from trust through that. Indeed, it itself has been prohibited, while spells are not prohibited. This is because burning with fire is a dangerous injury, and there is fear that it will spread, unlike cupping and venisection; neither is the benefit so apparent as is the benefit of venisection. Other things stand in its place. 'Imran bin al-Husayn[1717] became sick. He was told to cauterize, but he did not. When they insisted, he did it and became better. Then he said: "Before the cauterization, I saw a light and heard a voice and the angels were greeting me, but when I was cauterized, all became veiled from me. Then I repented and sought refuge (with God)." Then he said to Mutarrif bin 'Abdullah: "Then, after a while, God Most High returned that blessing (of the vision) to me."

DISCLOSING THAT NOT TAKING MEDICINE IN SOME SITUATIONS IS BETTER

And this is not in contradiction to the Messenger (S), because many of the saints would not accept treatment. It may be that someone says: "If this were a perfection, the Messenger (S) would not have taken medicine." This difficulty vanishes when thou knowest that there are six reasons for not taking medicine:

ONE (REASON) is that a person is an ecstatic and has learned that his hour of death is come. For this reason when (Abu Bakr) Siddiq was ill and he was asked whether he wanted a physician, he said: "The physician has seen me." He said: "*Surely I do that which I desire.*"

THE SECOND REASON is that the ailing person is occupied with the fear of the Hereafter, and the soul has no treatment. As when Abu Darda (R) was ill, he was asked: "What is thy complaint?" He replied: "The burden of sins." They asked: "What dost thou hope for?" He replied: "The mercy of God Most High." They asked: "Dost thou want a physician?" He said: "The physician has made me ill." Abu Dharr (R) had a pain in his eyes. He was asked: "Why dost thou not treat it?" He

[1717] ʿImrān bin Ḥusayn: No information about him at present.

answered: "I have more important work." The parable of this is that a person be brought before a king to be given punishment. A person says: "Thou shouldst not eat bread." He says: "Of what concern is eating and hunger?" This is not a gibe at a person who eats food and in opposition to him. It is being completely engrossed, as when Sahl was asked: "What is thy food?" He replied: "My food is the remembrance of the Living, the Sustainer." They said: "We are asking about nourishment." He said: "(My) nourishment is knowledge." They said: "We are asking about food." He said: "(My) food is the remembrance of God." They said: "We are asking about the food for the body." He said: "Forget the body and surrender to the Maker."

THE THIRD REASON is that it may happen that the sickness be chronic and medicine, in that sick person's view, like a spell that is rarely beneficial. The person who does not know medicine may look upon most medicines in that manner. Rabi' Khaytham says: "I intended to treat my own sickness, but I thought about the 'Ad and the Thamud,[1718] and those who had passed on, with many doctors among them. They are all dead and medicine did not avail (them)." Apparently, he did not consider medicine one of the external causes.

THE FOURTH REASON is that the ailing person does not desire his illness to disappear so long as there is a spiritual reward for his ailment, or (he wishes) to test his own endurance. In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High tries a servant with calamity, just as gold is tested in fire. There is the person who comes out of the illness pure and there is the person who comes out ruined. Sahl Tustari (R) ordered others to take medicine, but would not take medicine for his own ailment. He used to say: "Formal prayer in illness in the sitting position is better than formal prayer standing is for the healthy."[1719]

THE FIFTH REASON is that one has many sins and desires that the illness atone for them. For in the Traditions, it is related: "Fever attaches itself to the servant of God until it has cleansed him of his sins so that none remains, just as there is no dust on hail." Jesus (A) says: "He is not

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[1718] "the Ad and the Thamud": two peoples mentioned a number of times in the Quran. The tribe of Ad was located in southern Arabia and the prophet Hud was sent to them. They rejected his message and were destroyed. The prophet Salih was sent to the Thamud who also disobeyed him with a similar outcome. (Q. 7:63) Their stories are discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* and in a volume taken from it: *Abraham*.

[1719] That is, performing the entire formal prayer while sitting, a concession for those for whom standing, or the changes of position from standing to sitting and sitting to standing that are part of the outward aspect of formal prayer are difficult by reason of sickness, weakness, or physical disability.

a knower who does not rejoice at illness and misfortunes in his body and property, in the hope of atonement for his sins." Moses (A) looked at a sick person and said: "O Lord God, have mercy upon him." (God) said: "How may I have mercy upon him with regard to something by which I shall be merciful to him? For by (the illness), I make atonement for him for his sins and I increase his degrees."

THE SIXTH REASON is that knowing that wantonness, heedlessness, and rebellion arise from bodily health, one desires to remain sick so that he not fall into heedlessness. He for whom some good is desired is always chastised by calamity and illness. Because of this, it has been said that the believer is not devoid of three things: poverty, illness, and abjectness. In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High says: "Illness is My chain and poverty is My prison. I put a person in chains and in prison because I love him." Therefore, since bodily health leads to sin, purity lies in illness.

'Ali (R) saw a people adorned. He asked: "What is this?" They said: "It is their festival day." He said: "Any day in which we do not commit a sin is our festival." One of the great asked someone: "How art thou?" He answered: "In good health." (The other) said: "Any day thou dost not commit a sin, thou art in good health. If thou (sinnest), which illness is there that is more difficult than that?"

And, it has been said: "Pharaoh claimed to be a god because he had lived for four-hundred years with neither headache nor fever. If he was taken by a pain in his temples for an hour, he would not be concerned about it excessively." And it has been said: "If a servant of God has been ill once or twice and not repented, the Angel of Death says: 'O heedless one! How many times have I sent my messenger to thee and to no avail!'" And it has been said: "A believer should not be devoid of sorrow, sickness, fear, or loss for forty days."

The Messenger (S) wanted a woman in marriage. They said: "She has never been sick." They thought that this was praise for her. He said: "I do not desire her." One day, he talked about headache. A desert Arab asked: "What is a headache? I have never been sick." (The Messenger) said: "Keep away from me! Tell anyone who wants to see an inhabitant of hell to look upon him." 'Ayishah (R) asked: "O Messenger of God, Is there anyone in the degree of the martyrs?" He said: "Yes, a person who remembers his death twenty times a day and there is no doubt that he remembers the death-sickness even more." So, for these reasons there are some who have not sought treatment, but the Messenger (S) had no need of such (abstention): he took treatment because of that.

In summary, avoiding external means does not contradict trusting. Umar (R) was traveling to Syria. News came that there was a

great plague raging there. Some said that they should not proceed and others said that they should not avoid destiny. 'Umar (R) said: "If one of you has two valleys, one filled with fresh plants, the other dry, to whichever the sheep lead you is the one which has been destined." Then, he sought 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf to learn what he would say. He said: "I heard from the Messenger (S), who said: 'Do not go to a place where ye have heard there is a plague.[1720] If ye are in a city where plague appears, stay there and do not go out and do not flee.'" Then, 'Umar gave thanks that his own opinion was in agreement with the Tradition and the Companions were in agreement with that. Moreover, the prohibition against going out is because if the healthy leave, the sick will be lost and perish. And then, when (the plague) has infected the air, there is no advantage in leaving the city. In some of the Traditions, it is said that fleeing from that is like fleeing from the (opposing) ranks of the unbelievers. This is because it will dishearten the sick and there will be no one to give them food. Those (who remain) will certainly perish while the escape from (this fate) by the person who flees is doubtful.

Excursus: [Concealing Illness Is a Condition of Trust][1721]

Know that concealing an illness is a condition of trust. Moreover, disclosing it and complaining is disliked, except with an excuse: as when a physician orders or desires that one disclose his weakness and expel languor and rashness from oneself. When 'Ali (R) was asked during an illness whether he was better and felt well, he said: "No." They looked at one another in astonishment as to why he had said that. So he said: "I am displaying my courage and manliness to God Most High!" This was suitable for his determination, for with that strength and size of his, he displayed his own helplessness. About this, ('Ali) said: "O Lord, give me patience for my sustenance." The Messenger (S) said: "Ask God for well-being and do not ask for calamity." Therefore, when there is no excuse, if a sick person discloses it in the manner of a complaint, it is forbidden; but (if it is) not in complaint, it is permissible. Nonetheless, it is preferred that one refrain. For, it may be that one exaggerate in what one says and perhaps one may be suspected of complaint. It has been said that moaning is recorded against the sick person because it is a display. Iblis got nothing out of Job (A) except a moan. When Fudayl 'Iyad, Bishr, and Wuhayb bin al-Ward (R) became ill, they closed their doors lest anyone learn of it. They used to say: "We do not desire anyone to visit us when we are ill, for then one must complain of the illness." *Peace!*

[1720] "plague" (*wabā*): or cholera.
[1721] From the AA text.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCERNING LOVE, LONGING, AND CONTENTMENT

Know that the love of God Most High is the most exalted of the stations. Indeed, the objective of all stations is that. A quarter of the Destroyers are for the purification of all that takes one from the love for God Most High. All of the Delivers that we have discussed before this—repentance, patience, asceticism, fear, hope, etc.—are the preliminaries for this, and all that is after these—such as longing and contentment—is the fruit and consequence of those. The *ultima thule* of perfection of the servant of God is that the love for God Most High triumph in one's soul, so that his totality is engulfed (by that). If it is not thus, well, it should be more dominant than the love for other things. Coming to understand the true nature of love is so difficult that some of the scholastic theologians have denied it and have said: "It is not possible to love a person who is not of thy kind. The meaning of love (of God) is obedience and nothing else."

Whoever thinks this way has no inkling of the basis of religion. The explanation of this is important and we shall first relate the evidentiary proofs of the Religious Law and Doctrine to prove the love for God Most High. Then, we shall explain its true nature and rules.

The Virtue of the Love for God Most High

Know that all of the people of Islam are in agreement that the love of God Most High is a religious obligation. God Most High says: *He loves them and they love Him.* Q. 5:54) and the Messenger (S) says: "A person does not have complete faith until he loves God Most High and the Messenger (S) more than all else." They asked: "What is faith?" He replied: "That one love God and the Messenger more than all else." And he said: "A servant (of God) is not a believer until he loves God and the Messenger more than his kin, family, wealth, all mankind." And he said: "If ye love your father, children, wealth, dwelling, and all that ye have more than God Most High and the Messenger (S), be prepared until the command arrives: *Say: If your fathers, and your sons, and your brethren, (and your wives, and your tribe, and the wealth ye have acquired, and merchandise for which ye fear that there will be no sale, and dwellings ye desire are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving in His way; then wait till God bringeth His command to pass. God guideth not the wrongdoing folk.)* (Q. 9:24)[1722]

[1722] Assuming the reader would be familiar with the Quran, Al-Ghazzali has written "the verse" (*al-āyah*) instead of quoting the full verse completely. We have added the rest of the verse between parentheses.

Someone said to the Messenger (S): "I love thee." (The Messenger) said: "Be prepared for poverty." In the Traditions, it is related that when the Angel of Death took the soul of (Abraham) the Friend (A), (Abraham) said: "Hast thou ever seen a friend take the life of a friend?" Revelation came to him: "Hast thou ever seen a friend abhor the sight of a friend?" (Abraham) said: "Now take my soul, for I have given consent."

In a supplication of the Messenger (S) is: "*O God, endow me with Thy love and the love of him who loves Thee and the love of him who brings me closer to Thy love and makes Thy love more beloved to me than cool water.*" He said: "O Lord God, give me Thy love and the love of Thy friends and the love of everything that brings me closer to Thee as sustenance. Make Thy love more beloved to me than cold water to the thirsty."[1723] A desert Arab came and asked: "O Muhammad, when will the Resurrection occur?" (The Messenger) said: "What hast thou laid up for that day?" He answered: "I do not have much formal prayer and fasting, but I love God and (His) Messenger." He said: "Tomorrow, everyone will be with the one whom he loves."

(Abu Bakr) Siddiq (R) said: "Whoever tastes the pure love of God Most High becomes diverted from the world and becomes averse to mankind." Hasan Basri said: "Whoever has come to know God loves Him; whoever has come to know the world holds it in enmity." So long as a believer is not heedless (of the world), he is not happy; when he considers (it), he becomes saddened.

Jesus (A) passed by some thin and weak people. He asked: "What has befallen you?" They replied: "We have been consumed by the fear of God Most High." He said: "It is incumbent upon God Most High to protect you from the fire." He passed by another group who were thinner and weaker. He asked: "What has befallen you?" They replied: "The desire for Paradise has consumed us." He said: "It is incumbent upon God Most High to fulfill your desire." He passed by another group who were weaker and thinner than both of the (other) groups and their faces shone with light. He asked: "What has befallen you?" They replied: "The love for God Most High has consumed us." He sat with them and said: "You are the Proximate Ones; I have been commanded to sit with you."

Sari Saqati (R) says: "Tomorrow every person will be called back to the prophets. It will be said: 'O people of Moses! O people of

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[1723] It will be noted that Al-Ghazzali's Persian translation is slightly different from the Arabic text. Both Persian texts—HK and AA—use the word *man* in the Arabic passage which I have rendered as "him who," while Al-Ghazzali renders the Persian phrase he uses in that place as "everything that" (*har chīzī kih*). In Arabic, the pronoun *man* is used for persons: the pronoun for things would normally be *mā*. The Arabic text also does not include the phrase "to the thirsty" (*bar tishnah*) at the end.

Jesus! O people of Muhammad!'—except to the lovers of God. It will be said (to them): 'O friends of God, come to God Most High.' Their souls will be completely taken aback from joy." In some of the books of the prophets, it is (written) that God Most High says: "My servant, I love thee: by My right over thee, thou too lovest Me."

THE TRUE NATURE OF LOVE

Know that this love is so difficult that some have denied it with respect to God Most High. An explanation of this is important, even though discussion about this concept is subtle and not everyone can comprehend it. However, we shall illustrate it with examples so that whoever makes the effort may understand.

Know that the root of love must first be recognized as to what it is. Know that the meaning of love is the inclination of (one's) nature to something that is pleasant. If that inclination is strong, it is called passionate love. Hatred is the loathing by (one's) nature for something that is unpleasant. Wherever there is no "pleasant" or "unpleasant," there is neither love nor hatred.

Now thou must learn what "pleasant" is. Know that things are, with respect to thy nature, of three kinds: Some are agreeable to (thy) nature and they suit it. Indeed, (thy) nature itself demands them. That which is agreeable to (thy) nature is called "pleasant." Some are disagreeable and unsuited and opposite to the demand of (thy) nature. They are called "unpleasant." That which is neither agreeable nor opposed is called neither "pleasant" nor "unpleasant."

Now thou must learn that nothing is pleasant or unpleasant to thee so long as thou art first not aware of it. Being aware of things is the charge of the senses and the intellect. The senses are five, and for each one of these there is a pleasure, and because of that pleasure, one likes it; that is, (thy) nature inclines to it. The sensory pleasure of the eye is in beautiful forms and in greenery, flowing water, and the like. It necessarily loves them. The pleasure of the ears is in beautiful and rhythmic voices (and sounds). The pleasure of the nose is in sweet scents. The pleasure of the taste is in foods. The pleasure of touch is in soft touches. All of these are love; that is, (thy) nature has an inclination towards them, and animals have all of these, too.

The sixth sense is something in the soul that is called "reason," called "vision," called "light, or by whatever term thou wishest to utter. It is that which distinguishes a human being from beasts. It also has perceptions which are pleasant to it and which are dear to it, just as other pleasures are agreeable to the senses and dear to the senses. About this the Messenger (S) said: "Three things of the world have been made my friend: women, sweet scents, and my delight in formal prayer. He placed

the highest degree on formal prayer. Whoever is bestial is unaware of the soul and knows naught but the senses. He will never believe that formal prayer is pleasing and that it may be loved. A person who is dominated by his intellect, and is more distant from the attributes of the beasts, prefers the observation with the inner eye of the beauty of the Divine Presence, the wonders of His handiwork, the perfection and majesty of His Essence and Attributes over the observations with the outer eye of fine forms and greenery and flowing water. Indeed, in his view, all of these become lowly after the beauty of the Divine presence has been revealed to him.

Disclosing the Reasons of Love so that it becomes clear from that that nothing is deserving of Love save God Most High.

[Know that the reasons of love are five.]

THE FIRST REASON is that a human being loves himself, loves his own perfection, and loves his own survival; and (that he) is hostile to his own destruction, even if he would be annihilated without pain and without sorrow. Why would he not like that? When the cause of love is the agreement with one's nature, what thing would be more agreeable and more suited to one than existence, the continuation of existence, and the perfection of one's qualities? And what would be more contrary and more unsuited (to it) than one's extinction and the extinction of one's perfection and one's qualities?

Therefore, for this reason a father loves his child whose continuance he considers as his own continuance. Since he is helpless with respect to his own continuance, he also loves that which in some way resembles continuation. In reality, he loves himself. He also loves wealth; for, that is his instrument in his survival and in the survival of his qualities. He loves (his) relatives; for, he considers them of his own plumage and he recognizes himself completed by them.

THE SECOND REASON is good works. One naturally loves whoever has done good deeds to him. About this, it has been said: "*Man is the servant of the good deed.*" The Messenger (S) said: "O Lord, give no sinner the power to do good to me, for then my soul will love him." That is, this is (human) nature and cannot be forced to change. In reality, it also returns to one's self-love. A good deed is that which is done for one's continuance, or for the perfection of one's qualities. However, a man loves a healthy body causelessly.[1724] He loves the doctor because of

[1724] "causelessly" (*nah bi-ʿillatī*): that is, "inherently," without regard to good works, while he loves the doctor by *cause* of his curing him.

good health and for that. In the same way, he loves himself causelessly, but he loves a person who does some good for him for (his) doing of the good.

THE THIRD REASON is that one loves a benefactor even though (that person) has not done anything good for him. For if a person hears that there is a beneficent king in Morocco, learned and just, and that all of the people are comfortable with him, his nature will incline to him; even though he knows that he shall never reach Morocco and shall never see his good works.

THE FOURTH REASON is that one loves a person who is good, not for something that can be gotten from him. Instead, (it is) for his nature and his goodness. Beauty itself is naturally beloved for itself. It is permissible for a person to love beautiful forms, not out of carnality, (but) as one loves greenery and flowing water, not for eating, but for the pleasure the eye itself (derives) from their beauty. Beauty and goodness are loved. If the beauty of God Most High were to become manifest, it would be proper that one be able to love Him. The meaning of what beauty is will be discussed below.

THE FIFTH REASON is that there is in love a compatibility between two natures. There is the person whose nature suits (that of) another and one loves another not for (the other's) goodness. Sometimes, this relationship is apparent, as when one child becomes intimate with another, or one businessman with another, or one scholar with another; each to his own kind. And sometimes a relationship befalls (one) that is hidden in the basis of the in-born temperament and the heavenly causes that are dominant at the time of birth, which no one can penetrate. As the Messenger (S) put it in words when he said: "*Souls are mobilized hosts; those who know each other are united, those who do not know each other differ (among themselves).*" He said: "For souls there is knowing one another and being strangers." For, in reality, acquaintance may happen and they become familiar with one another. This acquaintance is the expression of the compatibility that we have discussed and one cannot follow its path in detail.

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF WHAT BEAUTY IS

Know that a person who is close to the beasts and knows nothing but the perceptions of the eye may perhaps say: "Beauty[1725] has no

[1725] "beauty": *nīkūyī* (in modern Persian, it is usually written *nīkū'ī*) can mean "beauty, goodness, elegance, favor," etc. Accordingly, the adjectival form *nīkū* can mean

meaning, except that that the face is pink and white and the limbs are in proportion." The result of that comes from shape and color. The beauty of whatever does not have shape and color is unimportant. This is an error, for the intelligent say: "This line is beautiful, the voice is beautiful, the clothing is beautiful, the horse is beautiful, the house is beautiful, the garden is beautiful, and the city is beautiful." Therefore, the meaning of beauty in anything is that every perfection appropriate for it be present in it and that it not lack in anything. The perfection of each thing is of a different kind. The perfection of calligraphy is in the proportion of the letters, one to another, and other values. There is no doubt that looking at beautiful calligraphy or a fine building is a pleasure. So, beauty is not restricted to the form of a beautiful face. All of these (kinds of beauty) are perceived by the external eye.

A person may admit this, but say: "How is something beautiful which cannot be perceived by the eye?" This, too, is ignorance. We say such-and-such a character trait is held to be good, and virtue is considered good. They say that knowledge with piety is very good and that courage with generosity is good; and abstinence, contentment, and eating frugally are better than all things. The likes of these are famous, but none of them can be seen by the external eye. Instead, they can be perceived by the vision of the intellect. We have discussed these in the chapter about the Discipline of the Self in this book.[1726] There are two forms (of beauty): the external and the internal. A good character is an internal form and it is naturally loved.

The proof of this is that a person may love Imam Shafi'i. Indeed it is not impossible that one love Abu Bakr and 'Umar (R). How would it be impossible that there be a person who would give generously of wealth and life for (his) love of them, though he has himself not seen them? Their (physical) forms have now become dust; but this love is for the beauty of their internal forms, (their) knowledge, piety, policies, and the like. In the same way, the messengers are loved for this. Whoever loves (Abu Bakr) Siddiq (R) loves him in any form that may be. One loves him for that quality by which he is *Siddiq* (Truly Righteous). Truthfulness and knowledge are [the qualities of][1727] a single part, called "an indivisible part," of the nature of the truly righteous. It has neither shape nor color. Some hold that it occupies space and others hold that it does not occupy space. Of whatever quality it may be, it does not possess shape and color. That is the beloved, not external skin and flesh.

Therefore, whoever possess intellect does not deny internal beauty and prefers that to the external form. There are many differences

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"beautiful, good, fine, elegant," etc. In this passage, Ghazzali is contrasting the external beauty/goodness with the internal variety.

[1726] Chapter One of the Third Pillar.

[1727] From the AA text.

between a person who loves an image painted upon a wall and a person who loves a prophet. Indeed, a small child, when he wants to refer to a person among those whom he loves, does not describe his eyes and eyebrows. Rather, he describes his generosity, bravery, knowledge, and power. When he wants to refer (to someone) he dislikes, he describes his inner ugliness, not his external ugliness. For this reason, the Companions are loved and Abu Jahl is hated. So, it has become clear that beauty is two: external and internal. The beauty of the inner form is loved just as external beauty; rather, it is more loved by whoever has a modicum of intellect.

Disclosing That He Who Is Deserving of Love in Reality Is God Most High and He Alone

Know that in reality there is none deserving of love save God Most High. Whoever loves another does so out of ignorance, except for a reason that is connected with God, as loving the Messenger (S) is also loving Him. Whoever loves a person, loves his messenger, his lover, and his beloved. Consequently, the love for scholars and the pious is also the love for God Most High. Thou knowest this by looking at the reasons for love:

AS FOR THE FIRST REASON, it is that one loves oneself and the perfection of oneself. It is a necessary of this that one love God, for one's being and the existence of one's attributes and perfection is all from one's existence. If it were not for His grace, one's creation would not be. If it were not for His grace in sustaining him, one would not endure. If it were not for His grace in the creation of the bodily members and endowments of his perfection, there would be nothing more lacking than he. Therefore, strange is the person who flees from the heat and loves the shade of the tree, but who does not love the tree that establishes the shade for him. He knows that just as the establishment of the shade is with the tree, the establishment of the existence of (his) essence and attributes is from God. Unless one does not know this (truth) itself, how can one not love Him? There is no doubt that the ignorant person does not love Him, because loving Him is the fruit of knowing Him.

THE SECOND REASON is that one loves a person who does good to him. For this reason, loving anyone other than God Most High is out of ignorance, for no one will not be able to do good for him—nor has done so—except God Most High. The kinds of His blessings to His

servants are uncountable, as we have discussed in the chapter on Meditation and Gratitude.[1728]

However, those good deeds which thou ascribest others, (thou doest) out of ignorance. No one gives thee anything until that time a person is sent with a commission that he cannot disobey. It is thrown into his soul that his rectitude, welfare, and benefit in religion or in the world lie in that he give something to (another) in order to reach his own goal. As a result, he gave (it to thee) for his own purposes and made thee a means to attain the spiritual reward of the Hereafter, or for praise and a reputation, or for something else. But (in reality), God, may He be glorified and exalted, gave it to thee. Without ulterior aim, He charged (the giver) with that belief and motivation so as to give it to thee. We have explained this concept in the chapter on Gratitude.[1729]

THE THIRD REASON is that one loves a person who is a doer of good deeds, even if he has not done any good deed for him. Just as whoever hears that in Morocco, for example, there is a beneficent king, just and compassionate with his people, who keeps his treasury for the poor, not tolerating that anyone oppress (another) in his kingdom, one would necessarily love his nature, even though one knows that one will never see him, nor will one receive any good thing from him. For this reason, loving (anything) other than God Most High is (done) out of ignorance, for one's favors are from none other than from Him. Whoever does good deeds in the world does so at His prompting.

So, what and how many blessings are themselves in the hands of mankind? The favor is that He has created all created things and given to all whatever is needed, so that which is not needed also does not exist, but He also bestowed that in which one's ornament and adornment lie. One knows this when one contemplates the kingdom of the heavens, the earth, plants, and animals so that one see wonders and one sees favors and blessings without limit.

THE FOURTH REASON is that one loves a person for (his) beauty: that is, the beauty of his intrinsic good qualities, as one loves, for example, Imam Shafi'i (R) or another leader among the Muslim leaders. One loves 'Ali (R) and another loves Abu Bakr (R) and 'Umar (R). A third loves all of them; indeed, he loves all messengers, may the peace and blessings of God be upon them all. The reason for this is their good qualities and the attributes of their innate nature. This results when thou examinest three more things:

[1728] Chapter Six of this Pillar.
[1729] Chapter Six of this Pillar.

ONE is the beauty of knowledge, for knowledge and the learned are beloved because they are good and noble. To the extent that the knowledge is nobler and the known nobler, its beauty is that much greater. The noblest of all fields of learning is the spiritual knowledge of God Most High and the spiritual knowledge of the Divine Presence, which comprises the angels, the Books, the messengers, the laws of the prophets, the management of the dominion, and the kingdoms of the world and the Hereafter. The prophets and the truly righteous are beloved because they have perfection in these studies.

THE SECOND comes with power, such as their power over the improvement of their own selves and the improvement of the servants of God Most High, their governance, the keeping of the kingdom of this world in order, and the order of the true nature of religion.

THE THIRD comes with being superior to[1730] and pure from fault and blemish, and from malicious characteristics. What are loved in them are these qualities, not their deeds; for any act not (performed) because of these qualities is not praiseworthy, like the deed that is performed accidentally or negligently. Consequently, the love of whoever is more perfect in these qualities is greater. It is for this, for example, that (Abu Bakr) Siddiq (R) is more loved than Shafi'i, and the messengers more beloved than Siddiq.

Now, consider these three qualities to the end that God Most High is deserving of love and that He possesses these qualities. There is no simple-hearted person who does not know this much: that the knowledge of the ancients and the moderns among mankind and the angels is nothing beside the knowledge of God Most High. He has said it all: *And of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little.* (Q. 17:85) Moreover, if all the learned are gathered to learn the wonders of His wisdom and knowledge in the creation of an ant or a gnat completely, they would not be able to do so. This much they know, they know from Him that which He created in them, as He said: *He hath created man; He hath taught him utterance.* (Q. 55:3-4) And then all (man's) studies are finite, while His knowledge is infinite. What relationship does (man's knowledge) have with that? Man's knowledge is from Him. Thus, all knowledge is from Him and His knowledge is not from mankind.

And if thou considerest power, power, too, is beloved. For this reason the bravery of 'Ali (R) is loved, and the administration of justice by 'Umar (R) for that is a kind of power. But what is the power of all mankind when compared with the power of God? Rather, all are helpless except those to whom He has given power. Since He has made all incapable of this—for if a fly steals something from them, they cannot get it back—they are incapable. Therefore, infinite power belongs to Him

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[1730] Or "inviolability" (*tanazzuh*): See Note 177 for a discussion of this concept.

Whose power is the cause of the heavens and the earth and every thing that is between them of jinn, man, animals, and plants. He is capable of (making) their like unendingly.

So, how is it permissible that one love (anyone) other than Him for reason of power? And when can a human being be perfect in the attribute of inviolability and freedom from defects? (Man's) first deficiency is that he is a servant and that he has no control over his own existence. On the contrary, he is created. What deficiency can there be greater than that? And then, he is ignorant of his own interior, not to mention other things! If one vein in his brain goes out of shape, he becomes mad and does not know the cause of that. Perhaps, the treatment has been placed in front of him, but he does not know that. When thou reckonest it up, how great is his helplessness and ignorance! His knowledge and power in that are limited, even if he is one of the Truly Righteous, even if he is a Messenger.

So then, He Whose knowledge is infinite is free from defects. The knowledge of God, may He be honored and glorified, is without limit. He is not affected by the turbidity of ignorance. His power is so perfect that the seven heavens and the earth are in the grasp of His power. If He were to destroy them all, no decrease would befall His greatness and sovereignty. Should He so desire, He is able to create a hundred thousand more worlds in an instant, (yet) there would be not an atom's increase to His greatness, for increase does not affect Him. He is free from defect. Non-existence does not affect His essence and His attributes. On the contrary, deficiency itself is impossible with respect to Him. Accordingly, it is the extreme limit of ignorance for anyone not to love Him, or to love another (in His stead). This love is more perfect than that which is because of (His) beneficence, for that (love) increases and decreases with the increase and decrease of blessings. When the reason is the former, one's love is at the state of perfection in all circumstances. Concerning this, revelation came to David (A): "O David, the most beloved of My servants is a person who worships Me not out of fear or avarice, but to discharge the duty due (My) Divinity." In the Psalms, it is written: "Who is more an oppressor than he who loves Me for the sake of heaven and hell? If I had not created heaven and hell, would I not have been worthy of devotion?"

THE FIFTH REASON is that in love there is a relationship. There is also a special relationship for man with God Most High, to which *Say: The spirit is by command of my Lord* (Q. 17:85) refers, and to which *verily, God created Adam in His image* refers; and that which He said: "My servant approaches Me so that I take him as a friend; then, I become his hearing, I become his sight, and I become his tongue." And that which He said: "*I became ill and thou didst not visit me, O Moses!*" (Moses) said: "Thou art the God of the Universe and immune to all

blights. How didst Thou become ill?" He said: "O Moses, such-and-such a servant of Mine was sick. If thou hadst visited him, thou wouldst have visited Me."

We have discussed the Tradition about the relationship of the form of Adam to the Divine Presence in the Prolegomena. Some explanations have been given, and other significations cannot be explained in books, for the understanding of the people would not have the strength to hear them. Indeed, many of the astute have stumbled in this. Some have fallen at resemblance, and have supposed that form is naught but the external form. Some have fallen at transmigration and union. Comprehending all of this is difficult. The point is that when thou hast learned the reasons for love, thou knowest that any love other than the love for God Most High is out of ignorance. For this reason, thou recognizest the simple-heartedness of that scholastic theologian who said: "One cannot love anything not of one's own kind. Since He is not of our kind, love for Him is impossible!"

Thus, the meaning of love is obedience, which that unfortunate fool did not understand, except as the carnal appetite by which one loves women. There is no doubt about the desire of that appetite for homogeneity. However, the love which we have discussed desires the beauty and perfection of spiritual qualities, not the homogeneity in the (physical) form. One who loves the Messenger does so not because, like him, (the Messenger) had a head, face, hands, and feet. Rather, he has a spiritual relationship, for he is like him in that he is living, learned, a disciple, a theologian, hearing, and seeing. These attributes are in perfection in (the Messenger). There is also a basis for this relationship, but the difference in perfection and attributes is limitless. Any remoteness and distance that arises from the increase of perfection increases the love, but it does not sever the root of the love, which is by virtue of the relationship. To this extent, every person acknowledges and recognizes a relationship, even though he does not come to know the secret and true nature of the relationship: that the "*verily God created Adam in His image*" of the Tradition is for that.

Disclosing That There Is No Pleasure Like the Pleasure of Seeing God Most High

Know that this is the spoken belief of all Muslims, but if they ask this of themselves: "What is the pleasure of seeing something that has no dimension,[1731] shape, or color?" they do not know (the answer). Nonetheless, they assert this with their tongues out of fear, because it has

[1731] "dimension" (*jihat*): literally "direction, surface, side." Here it refers to occupying space, solidity.

come in Religious Doctrine. Yet, inside one, there is no longing. How can one have a longing for something one does not understand? However difficult it may be to study this mystery in such a book as this, we shall explain in a brief exposition.

Know that this is based upon four principles: First, that thou knowest that seeing God Most High is more pleasant. Second, that thou knowest that the spiritual knowledge of God Most High is more pleasant than all things other than He. Third, that thou know that the ease and pleasure of the soul is in spiritual insight and knowledge, without there being a share for the eye and body in that. Fourth, that thou knowest that the pleasure which is reserved to the soul is more powerful and stronger than any pleasure of the eye, ear, or the other senses. If thou knowest all these, it will necessarily become clear that it is not possible for anything to be more pleasurable than seeing God Most High.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE: That thou recognize that ease of the soul lies in spiritual knowledge, for in that, there is a non-physical pleasure.

Know that powers have been created in the human being: each one created for a purpose and in consistency with his nature. Its pleasure is consistent with his nature, just as the power of anger has been created for dominance and revenge and one's pleasure is in (doing) that. The power of the carnal appetite has been created for the obtaining of nourishment and one's pleasure is in (doing) that. Make an analogy of the faculties of hearing, sight, etc., in the same manner: each one has a pleasure and these pleasures are different. The pleasure of sexual intercourse is different from the pleasure of giving rein to one's anger. There are also differences in strength; some are stronger, as the pleasure of the eye from a fine image is more dominant than the pleasure of the nose in pleasant scents. A power has also been created in the human soul that is called "intelligence" and "illumination." It was created for the knowledge and spiritual insights that do not enter the imagination or the senses, and that is one's nature, too. One's pleasure in that is that by it one knows that this world has been created and it requires a wise and All-Powerful Planner Who always was. In the same way, one learns the attributes of the Maker and His wisdom in (His) creation.

All of this does not come in the senses and the imagination. Rather, one knows and deduces subtle works through this power, such as putting (in man) the root of speech, putting writing, and putting geometry and subtle fields of learning. There is pleasure for one in all of these, so that if one is praised for a little humble knowledge, one rejoices. If it is said that he does not know, he becomes hurt, for he considers his own knowledge perfect. Nay, if one sits with a chess player, he is told: "Give him no direction," and they make many rules that one does not have strength to endure. From the joy and pleasure in that meager amount of knowledge, one becomes impatient and wishes to boast of it. Knowledge

is a quality of God Most High: what thing is more pleasurable to a human being than its perfection? What perfection is there greater than a perfection that comes with the attributes of God Most High? Thus, with this principle, thou hast learned that there is a pleasure for the soul from spiritual knowledge, without the eye and body's having any part in it.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE: That thou know that the soul's pleasure of knowledge and spiritual insight is stronger than the pleasure of things perceived by the senses and the pleasure of (satisfying) the carnal appetites.

Know that whenever a person plays chess and has not eaten all day long and is called to eat, he does not eat. He continues to play, so we know that his pleasure in winning at chess and improving (his game) is stronger than his pleasure in eating bread—because he prefers the former. As a result, we come to know the power of that pleasure because, when both are available, he chooses one (in preference to the other).

When thou hast learned this, know that the internal powers are more dominant in whoever is more intelligent. If one is left to choose freely between eating an almond confection with roast chicken and performing some deed in which an enemy will be overthrown and some office of command become procurable, he will choose command and victory (instead of the food)—unless his character has not been completely (formed), like that of a child; or (his internal powers) have died, as in an imbecile.

Therefore, for that person in whom both the appetite for food and the appetite for rank and command have been created, we know that the latter is stronger. It is the same for the scholar who studies the science of mathematics, or the science of geometry, or the science of Religious Law and Doctrine, or that in which he finds a pleasure—when it is not deficient and is perfect—he chooses that above all pleasures. Moreover, he will prefer that to command or governance, unless he is deficient in knowledge and has not received the complete pleasure of (knowledge).

So, from this it is clear that the pleasure of knowledge and spiritual insight is stronger than all other pleasures, but for the person who is not deficient and in whom both appetites have been created. For, even though a child will prefer the pleasure of playing with walnuts over the pleasure of sexual intercourse and the pleasure of command, we do not fall into doubt that this is a deficiency of his—that he does not have these appetites—because when both are provided, he will prefer them.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE: The spiritual knowledge of God Most High is more pleasurable than all other kinds of knowledge.

When thou hast learned that knowledge and spiritual insight are pleasurable, there is no doubt that some fields of knowledge are more

pleasurable (than others). For, however much that which is known is nobler and greater, its knowledge is more pleasurable. The knowledge of winning at chess is more pleasurable than the knowledge of playing chess and the knowledge of administering a kingdom is more pleasurable than the knowledge of viziership. And the knowledge of viziership is more pleasurable than the knowledge of tailoring and goldsmithery. The knowledge of the meanings of the Law and its mysteries, is more pleasurable than the knowledge of grammar and language, and knowing the secrets of the task of a minister in a ministry is more pleasurable than knowing the work of the people of the market place. Knowing the secrets of a ruler (yet) more pleasurable than knowing the secrets of a minister.

Therefore, behold! Is there any thing in existence nobler, greater, more perfect, and more majestic than the Lord of the Universe Who is the Creator of all perfections and all kinds of beauty? Is the management of any monarch in the keeping of his kingdom like His management of the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth and the ordering of the works of this world and the next world? Is there any presence finer and more perfect than the Divine Presence? Then, how is it possible that beholding some (human) presence could be more pleasurable than beholding that Presence—if a person has the eye to see that or has the intellect to know that—or knowing the secrets of a kingdom be more pleasurable that the secrets of that Kingdom?

Accordingly, it is apparent from this that the knowledge of God Most High, the knowledge of His attributes, the knowledge of His dominion and kingdom, and the knowledge of the mysteries of His Divinity are more pleasurable than all (other kinds) of knowledge, because the knowing of this knowledge is the most noble. Indeed, saying "noble" is a mistake and error; for other things, when thou ascribest them to Him, are no longer worthy of thy calling them "noble," nor can it be said they are "more noble." Thus, the knower in this world is always in a Paradise that is *a Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth* (Q. 3:133). Rather, more: for the breadth of the sky and the earth is finite, while knowledge is infinite. The garden that is the theater of the knower has no borders, while the heavens and the earth have borders. The fruit in that garden is not seasonal, nor is it beyond reach; rather, it is continuous and *the clusters are in easy reach*, (Q. 69:23) for what is closer than a thing that is from His essence? Hindrance, perfidy, and envy cannot affect that because however much more a person knows, intimacy is greater. Paradise is like that, so that multitudes of people are not crowded in it. Instead, it becomes more spacious.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE: That the pleasure of seeing is greater than the pleasure of knowing.

Know that that which is to be known is of two kinds: some are those which appear in the imagination, such as color and shape; and

some are those that one's intellect perceives and do not occur in the imagination, such as God Most High and His attributes. Indeed, some are themselves of thine own attributes, such as power, knowledge, desire, and life. For these, there is no question of how-ness and it does not come to the imagination. As for anger, passionate love, pain, and ease; there is no how-ness for all of these and they do not come to the imagination, but the intellect perceives them all.

Thy perception of everything that appears in the imagination is at two levels: One is that it presents itself in the imagination, as thou sayest: "Look at it." This is deficient. The other is that thou sayest that it appears in the eye; that is more perfect. Certainly, the pleasure of seeing the beloved is greater than the pleasure of imagining (the beloved), not because an image seen (with the eye) is different from or finer than (an image in the imagination); rather, it is the same, but it is brighter, as when thou seest the beloved at the time of mid-morning, thou findest a greater pleasure than at sunrise. It is not because the form changes; rather, it is because it is brighter and more disclosed.

In the same manner, whatever does not appear in the imagination, while the intellect perceives it, has two levels: one is called "spiritual knowledge." Beyond it, is another level called "vision" or "spiritual witnessing."[1732] The relation of the latter to knowledge in the perfection of illumination is like that of (ocular) sight to the imagination. As, for example, the eyelid is the veil of the eye—but not the imagination—so that until it lifts, there is no sight, so is the connection of a human being to (his physical) body that is a vehicle (made) of water and dust. His involvement with the appetites of this world is a veil (obstructing) spiritual witnessing, not spiritual knowledge. So long as this veil is not raised, spiritual witnessing does not become possible. About this, He said to Moses (A): *Thou shalt not see Me!* (Q. 7:143) Consequently, since spiritual witnessing is more total and more luminous, the pleasure is necessarily greater, just as with ocular sight, (as opposed to) the imagination.

Know that the true nature of that is that it is the same spiritual knowledge (of this world) that takes on a different character in the next world to which it has no close (resemblance). (It is like) the drop which becomes a man and the date stone which becomes a tree and reach perfection; then, this change becomes extremely clear. This is called "witnessing," "looking," and "seeing." Seeing is the metaphor of the perfection of perception, while spiritual witnessing is the perfection of this perception. This is because spiritual witnessing does not require

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[1732] The spiritual witnessing (*mushāhadah*) referred to here is the highest degree of perfection in contemplating the Divine Essence. The "spiritual knowledge" in the previous sentence is called *maʿrifat*.

dimension,[1733] just as the knowledge of this world does not require dimension.

Consequently, the seed of seeing is spiritual knowledge. Whoever does not possess spiritual knowledge is deprived of sight by an everlasting veil. For, whoever does not have the seed, planting is inconceivable. Whoever's knowledge is more complete, (his) seeing is more complete. So, do not suppose that all people are equal in seeing. Rather, each one has sight according to the amount of his knowledge. This is (the saying:) "*Verily, God is manifest to the people generally and to Abu Bakr especially.*" Not that he sees by himself and others see together; rather, he sees Him and others themselves do not see, for that was special for him. The seed was a spiritual insight that the others did not have. That which he (S) said: "The excellence of Abu Bakr (R) is not in many formal prayers and (in much) fasting. Rather, it is in the secret which is established in his soul." That secret is a kind of spiritual knowledge, and it is the seed of the seeing that will especial to him.

So, the difference of the seeing of the people, notwithstanding that God Most High is One, is like the difference among (reflected) images of a single form that appear in various mirrors. Some are small and some are large; some are brighter and some are darker; some are distorted and some are straight, so that perhaps the distortion reaches the point that the beautiful appears ugly, such as the (reflected) images on the length and breadth of sword. Though (the original) is beautiful, it (appears) unpleasant and loathsome.[1734] Whoever carries the mirror of his soul to that world, while it is dark or distorted—that which is the comfort of others—the exact same thing will become the causes of his sorrow.

Therefore, do not suppose that others receive that pleasure from seeing that the messengers of God receive, or that the common folk receive that (same pleasure) which the learned receive, or that other scholars receive that (same pleasure) which the pious and loving scholars receive. The difference between the knower who is dominated by the love for God Most High and the knower who is not so dominated lies in the pleasure, not in the seeing. Both see One, which is the seed of spiritual knowledge. The seed for both is equal. But their similitude is that of two persons whose ocular vision is equal and they see beauty. If one is more in love, his pleasure is greater. Consequently, knowledge of the perfection of happiness is not sufficient so long as there is no love for that. Love for that triumphs when the love for the world is cleansed from his soul. This cannot be accomplished except with asceticism and piety. Thus, the pleasure of the ascetic knower is more perfect.

[1733] See Note 1731 above.

[1734] The modern reader should remember that in the Middle Ages there was not much assembly-line production of goods. Mirrors were fashioned individually and rarely reflected exactly alike, hence Ghazzali's metaphor.

EXCURSUS: [THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PLEASURE OF THE SEEING AND THE PLEASURE OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE]

Certainly, thou mayst say: "If the pleasure of seeing is of the nature of the pleasure of spiritual knowledge, this is not so pleasurable." Thou sayest this because thou thyself hast no awareness of the pleasure of spiritual knowledge, but it may be that thou hast learned some words thrown together from a book or learned from someone, and thou hast labeled that "spiritual knowledge"—from which thou wilt in no manner obtain pleasure; as a person who calls pot-herbs[1735] a confection of almond[1736] and eats it. He does not get the pleasure of the almonds. However, one who tastes the real nature of spiritual knowledge finds such pleasure in it that if Paradise were shown to him in this world, he would prefer that (spiritual knowledge) to Paradise, just as the intelligent person will prefer the pleasure of sovereignty to the pleasures of the genitalia and the belly.

On the other hand, even though the pleasure of spiritual knowledge is tremendous, yet it does not approach the pleasure of the seeing of the Hereafter. This cannot be made clear to the understanding except with a parable: Postulate a lover who gazes at his beloved at dawn, when it has not yet become light, at a time when his love is weak and his carnal appetite lacking, and there are a scorpion and a bee in his clothing. They sting him and, with that, distract his soul from other affairs. He is alarmed at everything. There is no doubt that his pleasure is weak. Then, suddenly the sun rises and (the day) becomes brilliantly luminous. His carnal appetite and his love become overpowering and the matter of the scorpion and the bee becomes remote. His alarm leaves him. He derives a great pleasure in the sight of (his) beloved, far beyond that which he felt before.

The state of the knower in the world is like that. The darkness is an allegory of the weakness of spiritual knowledge in this world which, so to say, he looks at from behind a curtain. The weakness of love is due to (his) human deficiency that will be deficient until he is in the next world, and he does not achieve perfection in love. The scorpion and the bee represent the carnal appetites of this world and are grief and sorrow and the different kinds of affliction that exist. All of these muddle the pleasure of spiritual knowledge. Pre-occupation and alarm represent the cares of life, livelihood, obtaining food, and the like. All of these depart at death. The appetite and love for seeing are not finished except when the grief, sorrow, and preoccupations of this world are cut off. For this reason, that pleasure may achieve the extreme of perfection, even though

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[1735] "pot-herbs" (*tarīnah*): a dish eaten by the poor.

[1736] "a confection of almonds" (*lawzīnah*): a delicacy.

it is not more than the extent of the spiritual knowledge. Just as the pleasure the hungry receive from the smell of food has no relationship to the pleasure of eating, the pleasure of spiritual knowledge to sight is the same.

Excursus [The Eye of the Hereafter Is Not Like the Eye of the World]

Certainly, thou mayst say: "Spiritual knowledge is in the soul and sight is in the eye; how is this possible?" Know that the sight is called "sight" because it is the achievement of the perfection of the imagination, not because it is in the eye. For, if He had created the eye in the forehead, it would still be an eye. Therefore, becoming mired (in the question) about its location is presumption. Rather, since the word "sight" has been mentioned, and outwardly, it is of the (physical) eye, thou must believe that in the Hereafter the eye has some part. Thou shouldst know that the eye of the Hereafter is not like the eye of this world, for the eye (of this world) does not see anything but the surface, but the eye (of the Hereafter) sees without surfaces. More than this, it is not permissible for one to say or discourse upon to an unlettered person, for it itself is not within his power (to comprehend). Carpentry is not the work of an ape. Every scholar who has taken pains in the study of religious jurisprudence, the Traditions, and (Quranic) commentary is also unlettered in this sense, and neither is it his task. Indeed, he who has also toiled in scholastic theology is also unlettered concerning the true nature of this, for the scholastic theologian is the provost and the escort of the belief of the unlettered. He preserves whatever the unlettered person has come to believe by (means of citing) relevant Traditions. (The scholastic theologian) wards off the evil of heresy from him and knows the way of disputation.

However spiritual knowledge itself, so to say, is something else, and its folk are of another kind. Since this discussion is not suitable for such a book as this, it is better than we confine ourselves to this.

Excursus: [How One May Obtain the Pleasure of Spiritual Knowledge and the Love for God]

Certainly, thou mayst say: "A pleasure in which the pleasure of Paradise is forgotten will never be conceivable by me." No matter how much has been said about this concept, what is the plan, so that if one does not have that pleasure, one at least may secure belief in it? This is treated by four things:

ONE is that thou reflect upon what has been said above and think about it much, until it becomes clear that (just) by hearing words one time, they do not enter the soul.

THE SECOND is that thou know that human characteristics in appetite and pleasure were not created at one time. Rather, the first appetite of a child is for eating and he knows nothing other than that. When he approaches his seventh year, the appetite for play appears in him, so that he passes up food and goes to play. When he is about ten years old, the appetite for adornment and fine clothing appears in him so that he leaves play in the desire of clothes. When he is fifteen, the pleasure of the carnal appetite and intercourse with women appears in him, so that he places all his desires in seeking that. When he is about twenty years old, the pleasure of governance, dominion, boasting, competition, and seeking advancement in rank appears in him. This is the end of the degrees of pleasures in the world, as God Most High said in the Quran: *Verily the life of this world is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children*. (Q. 57:20)

Then, when he has passed through these, if the world has not completely ruined his inner (self) and has not made his soul diseased, the pleasure of the spiritual knowledge of the universe and the Creator of the universe, the mysteries of the dominion and the kingdom of heaven appear in him, so that whatever is of the past is trivial in comparison with that. All of that, too, becomes trivial in comparison with (new knowledge). The pleasure of heaven is no more than the pleasure of the belly, the genitalia, and the eye: for one continuously looks at a garden, eats food, and gazes at greenery, flowing water, and decorated palaces. This is the same carnal appetite that is also in this world and that becomes humble and trivial beside the appetite for governance, conquest, and giving orders, not to mention spiritual knowledge. There is the monk who has imprisoned himself in a monastery and eats no more than the quantity of a pea every day in the greed for rank, acceptance, and their pleasure. Therefore, he loves the pleasure of rank more than heaven, for heaven is nothing more than the pleasures of the genitals, the belly, and the eye.

So, the pleasure of rank that trivializes all (other) appetites is overwhelmed by the pleasure of spiritual knowledge. Thou hast faith in all of this as thou hast achieved it all, while a child who has not attained (such) rank does not have faith in it. If thou desirest to explain the pleasure of governance to him, thou wilt not be able to do so. In the same way, the spiritually insightful knower at thy hands is as helpless and distressed, because of thy blindness, as thou art at the hands of the child. But, if thou hast a little bit of intelligence and reflect, this will not remain hidden (from thee).

THE THIRD REMEDY is that thou study the states of the knowers and listen to their words; for the eunuch or the impotent, even if he does not know the pleasure of the passion of sexual intercourse, he sees men

spend all they have for that and rush out in the search for it. He will certainly gain some knowledge that there is a passion and pleasure for them which is beyond that which there is for him.

Rabi'ah was a woman who was told about heaven. She said: "*The neighbor; then, the house.*" First, the master of the house; then, the house. Abu Sulayman Darani says: "There are servants of God Most High who are not distracted from God Most High by fear of hell and the hope of heaven. How can the world occupy them?"

One of the friends of Ma'ruf Karkhi said to him: "Tell me what it is that has made thee so disgusted with mankind and the world, and has made (thee) occupy thyself with seclusion and worship? Is it the fear of death, the fear of the grave, the fear of hell, or the hope of heaven?" He replied: "What are all these? There is a King who has all these. If thou tastest His friendship, thou wilt forget all these. If some knowledge and acquaintance appears to thee with Him, thou wilt disdain all of them."

Bishr Hafi was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What is the state of Abu Nasr Tammar[1737] and 'Abd al-Wahhab Warraq?"[1738] He answered: "I left them in Paradise at this time, eating the food of Paradise." He was asked: "And what about thee?" He replied: "God Most High knew that I had no desire for food and drink. He favored me with the sight of Himself."

'Ali bin al-Muwaffaq says: "I saw heaven in a dream and many people were eating food; angels were placing choice morsels in their mouths. I saw one in front of Paradise staring, his eye bulging, stupefied. I asked Ridwan:[1739] 'Who is he?' He answered: 'Ma'ruf Karkhi, whose worship was neither out of the fear of hell, nor in the hope of Paradise. (God) has made it lawful for him to look.'" Abu Sulayman Darani says: "Whoever is occupied with himself today, tomorrow it will be the same. Whoever is occupied with his Lord today, tomorrow it will be same."

Yahya bin Mu'adh says: "One night, I saw Bayazid sitting on two feet from the evening obligatory formal prayer until morning, his heels lifted, and his eyes starting from his head in astonishment. Finally, he prostrated himself and (then) stood for a long time, his head raised, and said: 'O Lord God, some have sought Thee. Thou hast favored them so that they walked on water and flew in the air. I seek refuge with Thee from those things. And Thou hast given some the treasures of the earth. Thou hast given some to travel a vast distance in one night and they were made happy by that. I seek refuge with Thee from all of that.' Then he

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[1737] Abū Naṣr Tammār: ʿAbd al-Malik bin ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, a noted ascetic. He died AH228/842-3CE. Qushayri also mentions him.

[1738] ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Warrāq: No other information about him from available standard sources at present. An ʿAbd al-Wahhāb is mentioned by Qushayri. *Warrāq*, if that was his trade, means copyist or someone working with paper.

[1739] Ridwān: the name of the porter or gardener of Paradise.

turned and saw me. He said: 'O Yahya, art thou here?' I said: 'Yes.' He asked: 'How long then?' I said: 'A long time.' Then I said: 'Tell me something of those states.' He said: 'I shall tell thee what is suitable for thee. I was shown around the highest kingdom of Heaven and the lowest kingdom. A cry came: "Ask for anything thou desirest of all these so that I may give it to thee." I said: "I desire nothing from all of these." He said: "Thou art indeed My servant!"'"

Abu Turab Nakhashbi[1740] had a disciple deeply immersed in his own affair. Once, Abu Turab said to him: "If thou seest Bayazid, it is permissible." He said: "I am (too) busy for Bayazid." Then, (Abu Turab) said that several times. The disciple said: "I see the Lord of Bayazid; what have I to do with Bayazid?" Abu Turab said: "If thou seest Bayazid one time, it will be better than thy seeing the Lord of Bayazid seventy times." The disciple became dumbfounded and asked: "How?" (Abu Turab) replied: "O helpless one! Thou seest God with thee; He appears according to thy capacity. But thou wilt see Bayazid with God Most High according to his capacity." The disciple understood and said: "Let us go." (Abu Turab) said: "We went to him. He was sitting in a thicket. We went up a rise in the ground and waited for him to come out. He was wearing a fur cloak turned inside out. The disciple looked at him, cried out, and fell dead. I said: "O Bayazid! One glance and that fatal!" He said: "No, the disciple was truthful and there was an inner secret in him that would not be revealed with his strength. When he saw us, it was suddenly revealed. He was weak and could not endure it and he perished."

And Bayazid said: "If He were to give thee the Friendship of Abraham, the Conversation of Moses, and Spirituality of Jesus, do not turn back from Him, for He has works beyond those." Bayazid had a friend, a purifier.[1741] He said to (Bayazid): "It has been thirty years that I perform formal prayer at night and fast by day, but nothing of that which thou speakest has yet appeared to me." (Bayazid) said: "Thou art veiled by thyself." (The purifier) asked: "What is the remedy?" (Bayazid) answered: "Thou wilt not be able to do it." (The purifier) said: "Tell me so that I may do it." (Bayazid) said: "Thou wilt not do it." (The purifier) said: "Please tell me." (Bayazid) said: "Right now go to the barber and tell him to shave off thy beard and mustache. Become naked and bind a loincloth about thy waist and hang a bag full of walnuts about thy neck. Cry out in the market: 'I shall give a walnut to any child who slaps me on

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[1740] Abū Turāb Nakhashbī: 'Askar bin al-Husayn (Hasin?) al-Nakhshabi. One of the more important of the shaykhs of Khorasan and an inveterate traveler. He used to cross deserts disregarding everything. He died in the desert near Basrah AH245/859-60CE. (Hujwiri; Qushayri)

[1741] "a purifier" (*muzakkī*): one who purifies his possessions by consecrating a part thereof to pious uses. (S)

the neck.' In the same manner, go before the judge and the purifiers of the city.'" The man cried: "Glory be to God! What is this that thou art saying?" Bayazid replied: "Thou hast denied the Oneness of God by saying 'Glory be to God!' because thou saidst it out of self-magnification." (The purifier) said: "Tell me something else, for I cannot do that." (Bayazid) said: "Thy first remedy is that." (The purifier) said: "I cannot do that." (Bayazid) said: "I told thee myself that thou couldst not do it." And he said this because the man was occupied with himself, (his) pride, and the seeking of rank. He had been conquered (by them) and that would have been his treatment.

In the Traditions, it is related that revelation came to Jesus (A): "When I look into the soul of a servant (of God) and see neither the world nor the Hereafter, I place My love there and I am the Superintendent of his preservation." Ibrahim Adham said: "O Lord God, Thou knowest that heaven in my view is not worth a mosquito wing beside Thy love that Thou hast bestowed upon me and the intimacy that Thou hast given me with Thy remembrance." Rabi'ah was asked: "How dost thou love the Messenger (S)?" She answered: "Strongly, but love for the Creator has diverted me from love for the created." Jesus (A) was asked: "Of deeds, which is preferred?" He answered: "The love for God Most High and approving of what He does."

In short, there are many such Traditions and stories. In the context of the states of these people, it necessarily becomes clear that the pleasure of spiritual knowledge and His love is greater than the pleasure of Paradise. Thou must think well about that.

Disclosing the Cause of the Concealment of the Spiritual Knowledge of God Most High

Know that discerning a thing becomes impossible for two reasons: one is that it is hidden and not clear; the other is that its extremely bright and the eye does not have the strength to endure it. It is for this reason that a bat cannot see during the day, but sees at night; not because things are clearer at night, but because by day they are so very bright, while its eye is weak. So, the difficulty of the knowledge of God Most High is its brilliance, for it is so manifest that souls do not have the strength to perceive it. Thou comest to know the luminosity and appearance of God Most High when thou makest an analogy: If thou see a written line or stitched clothing, there is nothing more plain to thee than the power, knowledge, life, and desire of the scribe, or the tailor who stitched (the garment). By his work, his internal attributes become so clear that knowledge (of them) is necessarily acquired.

If, in all the universe, God Most High had not created more than a single bird or had not created more than a single plant, whoever looked at it would necessarily discern the perfection of its Maker's power,

knowledge, majesty, and greatness; for the evidence of these are more obvious than the evidence of the scribe. But, when all that is in existence of heaven and earth, animals and plants, and stones and clods of earth—indeed, everything He has created or one can fancy of one can imagine—all are of one character in that they testify to the beauty and majesty of (their) Maker. He has become concealed by the sheer multiplicity of signs and (the magnitude of their) brilliance. If some of His works were (bright) and others were not, then He would have been manifest; but since all have become of the same nature, He is hidden.

The parable of this is that there is nothing more brilliant than the sun by which all things are made manifest. But, if the sun were not to set at night or did not become hidden by shade, no one would know that there is a light, for example, on the face of the earth. They would not have seen anything other than white, green, and colors. They would say that there is nothing more than this. Therefore that which is known, that there is a thing (called) light beyond the colors and by which the colors are revealed, (is known) because the colors have been obscured by the night and are more obscure in the shade than in the sunlight. As a result, they have learned (of the sun's existence) from its contrary.

In the same way, if absence or annihilation were possible for the Creator, the heavens and the earth would all collapse upon each other and become non-existent. Then, He would necessarily have been known! However, since all things are of one character in testifying (to the Creator), and this witnessing is continuous and most luminous, (He) is therefore concealed by that luminosity.

Too, as this is established in the eye during childhood, when one's intellect is not mature enough to hear their witnessing. When one has become accustomed to and familiar with them, thereafter one is not aware of their witnessing, except when one sees a strange animal or a strange plant. Then, one's unawareness leaps from ones tongue: "Glory be to God!" for the witnessing has given awareness to one's soul.

Therefore, the eye of anyone who is not weak sees all that he sees as being of His handiwork, not the thing itself. He does not see the heavens and the earth; rather, he sees them from (their) aspect of being His handiwork; just as a person sees some writing does not see it not from the aspect of its being ink and paper—a person who sees it thus does not know how to write. Instead, he sees it as ordered lines so that he sees the writer in them. As in a compilation, he sees the compiler, not the lines. When it is thus, he sees God Most High in all that he looks upon, for there is no thing that is not of His making. Indeed, the entire universe is His compilation and handiwork. If thou wishest to look upon something that is neither of His (work) nor His, thou wilt not be able to. For, everything gives testimony of the perfection of His power, majesty, and greatness in an eloquent language, that which is called the language

of signs. There is nothing brighter in the universe, but the inability of mankind to (perceive) this is due to their own weakness.

Disclosing the Remedy for (Achieving) Love

Know that since love is the greatest of the stations, becoming acquainted with the remedy for achieving[1742] that is important. For, whoever desires to become a lover of goodness, the first step is that he turn away from all things except (the beloved). Then, he continuously looks upon (the beloved). When he sees (only the beloved's) face, but the hands, feet, and hair are concealed—and that is also good—he strives to see (the rest) also, so that every beauty he sees will increase his inclination. If he is persevering, the inclination will appear in him, small or great.

Then, the love for God Most High is also thus. The first condition is that one turn one's face away from the world and cleanse one's soul from loving it, for the love for other than God Most High will distract (one) from the love for Him. This is like cleaning the ground of thorns and weeds. Then, one seeks the spiritual knowledge of Him; for, the cause of anyone's not loving Him is that he has not come to know Him. If that (were) not so, (His) beauty and perfection would naturally be beloved. When a person comes to know (Abu Bakr) Siddiq and ('Umar) Faruq, he cannot not love them. Their virtues and laudable acts naturally (inspire) love. Obtaining spiritual knowledge is like putting a seed in the soil. Then, one continually occupies oneself in remembrance (of God) and meditation. This is like watering (the seed), for whoever remembers a person much, will certainly find an intimacy with him.

Know that no believer is devoid of the principle of love, but there are disparities in this for three reasons: One is that they differ in love and in being occupied with the world, and one love—whatever it may be—is detrimental to another love. Next, there are differences in knowledge. One of the common folk, for example, loves Shafi'i (R) because, in short, he considers him a great scholar. But the jurisprudent who is aware of the details of some of his studies, loves him more, for he knows him better. Muzani,[1743] who was his student, and who knows of all of his studies, states, and character traits, loves him more than other jurisprudents. Therefore, whoever has come to God Most High better, loves Him more. Another is that there are differences in the remembrance and worship with which intimacy is achieved.

[1742] "the remedy for achieving": Ghazzali uses the word *'ilāj* which usually refers to medical remedies, cures, and treatments; that is, for overcoming a disease or imperfection. Here, however, he is referring to the method for attaining some desirable end (the station of love) rather than a method to correct something undesirable.

[1743] Muzanī: Abū Ibrāhīm Ismā'īl bin Ibrāhīm; died AH264/877-8CE.

Thus, the disparities of love arise from three causes. However, as for one who does not love (God) at all, it is because he does not know Him at all. Just as the beauty of the external form is naturally loved, the beauty of the internal form is the same. Consequently, love is the fruit of spiritual knowledge, and the perfection of spiritual knowledge is obtained in two ways:

ONE is the way of the Sufis, who are the chaste of the age and who are involved in earnest striving, keeping (themselves) internally pure through the continual remembrance (of God), so that one forgets one's self and all save God. Then, internally, effects begin to appear by which the greatness of God Most High becomes manifest and becomes like witnessing. The simile of this is spreading a net: perhaps, some prey may fall into it and perhaps not. Perhaps, a mouse will be caught, perhaps a hawk. There is a great difference in this and it is according to felicity and fortune.

THE OTHER method is by learning the lore of spiritual knowledge, not scholastic theology and other sciences. The first step is meditation upon the wonders of (His) handiwork, about which we have made some observations in the chapter on Meditation.[1744] Then, one progresses from this to meditation upon the majesty and beauty of the Essence, so that the true natures of the Names and the Attributes become disclosed to him. This is a lengthy study, but it is possible for the clever one to attain (his goal), if he finds a knowing master. However, the slow-witted will not achieve it: This is not like the dropping of a net, for it may be that prey fall in it and it may be that it does not. Instead, this is like agriculture, business, and earning a livelihood. It is as though a person gets hold of some sheep, male and female, so they may propagate progeny. Certainly, the property will increase, unless it is destroyed by lightning.

Whoever seeks love other than by the way of spiritual knowledge seeks the impossible. Whoever seeks spiritual knowledge other than by the two methods that have been discussed will not obtain it. Whoever supposes that he will achieve the (spiritual) happiness of the Hereafter without love for God Most High, supposes erroneously, for the happiness of the Hereafter is nothing more than thy reaching God Most High. And whoever attains something—if he had loved it before, but because of hindrances was prevented from that and has spent time in the enthusiasm for that thing—when he attains it and the hindrances are lifted, he falls into great pleasure. (Spiritual) happiness is this. If he does

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[1744] Chapter Seven of this Pillar.

not love Him, he finds no pleasure. If he loves Him a little, he receives a little pleasure. Therefore, (spiritual) happiness and pleasure are commensurate with passion and love.

And if, *God forbid*, one has not done that within oneself, so that one has become acquainted with something which is His opposite, and has taken that as an intimate and a relation; that which will appear in the Hereafter will oppose him. That will be his ruin and he will fall into grief and pain. The very same things by which others become happy will make him miserable. He is like the sweeper who went to the market of the perfumers and some of those fine fragrances reached his nose. He fell down in a faint. The people came and sprinkled his face with rose water and musk. He became worse, until someone, who was there at the time the man would do his sweeping, arrived on the scene. He knew why the man had fallen unconscious. He brought some human filth and put it by the man's nose. He came to and exclaimed: "Akh! There is a sweet smell!"

Thus, whoever has become habituated to the pleasures of this world, so that it is become his beloved, is like that sweeper; just as he finds nothing in the market of the perfumers. Rather, all that is there is contrary to his nature and his grief is increased by it. He does not find the filth with which he had become familiar. In the Hereafter, too, he[1745] will find nothing. All of everything there will be in opposition to his nature. As a result, all will become the cause of his sorrow and hardship.

So, the Hereafter is the world of souls and the world of the beauty of the Divine Presence. Fortunate is the person whose nature has been given here a relationship to that, so that it is agreeable to his nature. All ascetic practices, acts of worship, and spiritual insights are for the sake of this relationship. Love itself is the essence of this relationship. *And he is indeed successful who causeth it to grow* (Q. 91:9) is this. All sins, carnal appetites, and all kinds of love for the world are the contrary of this relationship. *And he is indeed a failure who stunteth it* (Q. 91:10) is this. The perspicacious in the witnessing of these sublime realities have passed beyond the boundary of imitation. They have recognized this from the truthfulness of a messenger. Indeed, they have recognized the truthfulness of a miracleless messenger[1746] necessarily in this (way). Just as a person knows medicine, when he hears the speech of physician, he will necessarily recognize him as a physician. When he hears the speech of a doctor of the market place, he knows that (the man) is ignorant.[1747] Therefore, one necessarily distinguishes a (true) prophet

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[1745] "he": Ghazzali is returning to the person who loves the contrary of God.

[1746] The Prophet did not claim to be a miracle worker.

[1747] Both the physician (*ṭabīb*) and the doctor (*ḥakīm*) practice medicine, but the *ṭabīb* is supposed to have studied medicine (*ṭibb*) formally, while the *ḥakīm* is often of a lower

from a lying false prophet in the same way. This is a self-evident knowledge, not like the knowledge that results in the turning of a staff into a dragon. That knowledge is in danger of being nullified should a calf moo! Distinguishing miracle from magic is not that easy.

The Signs of Love

Know that love is valuable jewel.[1748] Claiming love is easy, so that a person may think that he is one of the lovers, but there are signs and proofs of love. One must seek the signs in oneself, and they are seven:

The first (sign) is that there is no loathing for death, for no friend dislikes the sight of the Friend. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever loves the sight of God Most High, God Most High loves the sight of him, too." Buwayti[1749] said to one of the ascetics: "Dost thou love death?" The ascetic hesitated in replying. (Buwayti) said: "If thou wert truthful, thou wouldst love it." However, it is permissible that there be love and loathing at the hastening of death—(but) not at the principle of death—so that one who has not yet prepared his provisions (for the Hereafter) may make (them). The sign of this is that one is impatient in preparing the provisions.

The second sign is that one prefers that which is loved by God Most High to that which is loved by him. He does not neglect anything he knows may be the cause of his proximity to the Beloved. He avoids all that causes his distancing (himself) from that. This is a person who loves God Most High with all his soul. As the Messenger (S) said: "Say to whoever wishes to see a person who loves God with all his heart: 'Look at Salim, the client[1750] of Hudhayfah.'"

Moreover, if a person commits a sin, it does not follow that he is not a lover (of God). Instead, his love is not with his whole heart. The evidence of this is that Nu'ayman[1751] was punished several times for drinking wine. Someone cursed him in the presence of the Messenger (S). The Messenger (S) said: "Curse him not, for he loves God Most High and His Messenger." Fudayl said: "When thou art asked if thou lovest God, remain silent. If thou sayest 'no,' thou becomest an

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order of training and sometimes what we would call a "quack." The distinction I have made in this passage is for clarity: Persian usage is often looser than this.

[1748] "jewel" (*gawhar*): *Gawhar* may also mean "essence, substance."

[1749] Buwayti: Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf bin Yahyā al-Buwayṭī, an important disciple of al-Shafi'i (see Note 401). He died in prison AH231-2/846CE for refusing to declare the Quran created.

[1750] "client" (*mawlā*): See Note 24 to Book Two.

[1751] Nu'ayman: Nuʿaymān Anṣārī, see Note 1127.

unbeliever. If thou sayest 'yes,' thy behavior does not resemble the acts of the lovers (of God)."

THE THIRD SIGN is that one always renews the remembrance of God Most High in one's soul and is eager to do that without taking pains; for whoever loves a thing remembers it frequently. If the love is complete, one never forgets (the object of love) itself. Yet, if one must force the heart to remember, it is feared that his beloved is that His remembrance dominate his soul. Consequently, it may be that the love for God Most High is not dominant, but the love for the love of Him dominates him who desires to love. Love is one thing and the love of love is another.[1752]

THE FOURTH SIGN is that one loves the Quran, which is His Word, and the Messenger, (S) and all that is established by Him. When the love has become strong, one loves all mankind, for all are His servants. Indeed, one loves all extant things, for all are His creation, just as one who loves someone loves his composition and writing.

THE FIFTH SIGN is that one is avid for conversation (with God) in private and desirous for the coming of night. Crowds and hindrances depart and one holds conversation with the Friend in private. If one prefers sleep and idle chatter to solitude during the night and the day, one's love is weak. Revelation came to David (A): "O David, become the intimate of no one among mankind. No one is cut off from Me save two persons: one is he who hastens in the search for spiritual reward. When it comes late to him, he becomes languid. The other is he who forgets Me and is satisfied with his own condition. The sign of that is that I leave him alone and I keep him bewildered in the world."

Therefore, if love is total, affection for nothing else remains. There was a worshipper among the Children of Israel who would perform formal prayer at night. He would take his praying to beneath a tree where a bird with a sweet voice would sing. Revelation came to the messenger of the era: "Tell him: 'Thou hast become accustomed to seclusion. Thy degree has fallen because thou are not attending to anything of that.'"

Some have achieved such a degree in their conversations (with God) that fire has broken out in the other side of the dwelling and they did not become aware of it! The foot of one of them was cut during (his) formal prayer on some pretext, and he was unaware of it. Revelation came to David (A): "A person who claimed to love Me lied and slept all night. Does the friend not desire the sight of the Friend? Whoever seeks me, I am with him." Moses (A) said: "O Lord God, where art Thou that I may seek Thee?" He answered: "Whenever thou hast intended to seek (Me), thou hast found (Me)."

[1752] That is, the *act of remembering God* becomes one's object rather than God Himself.

THE SIXTH SIGN is that worship becomes easy for one and its burdensomeness falls away. Someone says: "For twenty years I forced myself strenuously to perform the night formal prayer. Afterwards, I have taken delight in that for twenty years." When love becomes strong, no pleasure equals the pleasure of worship. How can it itself be difficult?

THE SEVENTH SIGN is that one loves all of His devout servants and one is merciful and compassionate to them, and one holds all unbelievers and rebels (against God) in enmity. As He said: *(They are) hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.* (Q. 48:29) One of the prophets asked: "O Lord God, who are Thy saints and friends?" He answered: "Those who are captivated with Me, like small children are captivated with their mothers. And just as a bird takes refuge in its nest, they take refuge with the remembrance of Me. Just as a leopard becomes enraged and fears nothing, they become enraged when a person commits a sin."

These and signs like these are many. They are present in him whose love is complete. The love of him who has some of them in him is in accordance with that (amount).

DISCLOSING THE MEANING OF THE LONGING FOR GOD MOST HIGH

Know that whoever denies love also denies longing. In a supplication of the Messenger (S), there is: *I beseech Thee for the longing for meeting Thee and the pleasure of gazing upon Thy Noble Countenance.* And he said: "God says: *Long has become the yearning of the god-fearing to meet Me and I yearn more strongly to meet them.*"[1753]

So, thou must recognize the meaning of longing, what longing for God Most High is, for there is no love without longing. But, one by whom this is not recognized at all, has no longing. If it is recognized, is present, and is seen; it is also not longing. Therefore, longing is for something that is present in one respect and absent in another, like the beloved who is present in the imagination, but absent from the eye. The meaning of longing is "request" and "seeking" for that to become present in the eye so that perception may become complete. Then, from this thou comest to know that it is not possible for the longing for God Most High to be fulfilled in this world. It is present in spiritual knowledge, but absent from witnessing. Witnessing is the perfection of spiritual knowledge, just as seeing is the perfection of the imagination. This longing will not depart save with death. However, another kind of longing will remain that will not depart in the Hereafter either.

The deficiency of perception in this world has two aspects: One is that spiritual knowledge is a perception, resembling seeing from

[1753] Ghazzali follows the Arabic with a Persian translation omitted here.

behind a curtain, or seeing at the time of the first light, before the sun has risen. This will become clear in the Hereafter, and this longing will be cut off. The other is that a person has a beloved whose face is visible, but (whose) hair and limbs are unseen. He knows that all are fine and he is in a state of longing to (see the unseen parts). In the same way, the beauty of the Divine Presence has no limit. If a person is acquainted with much, that which remains is greater; for, there is no limit for His known things. Until one knows all, one has not perceived the entirety of the beauty of the Divine Presence. This is not possible for a human being, either in this world or in the next world, for the knowledge of a human will never be infinite.

So, however much seeing increases in the Hereafter, pleasure increases, and that is without end. When the soul sees that which is present, (the soul's) state is all rejoicing and happiness with that. That is called "familiarity," and it is not the end of longing. When the soul sees that which remains (to be perceived), the state of the soul is seeking and importuning. That is called "longing." There is no limit to this familiarity and this longing, neither in this world, nor in the next. They are always saying in the Hereafter: *O our Lord, perfect our light for us!* (Q. 66:8) For whatever becomes revealed of the beauty of the Divine Presence, all are lights. They have the desire for the totality of that, but they do not have the capacity. No person knows God Most High perfectly except God. Since one cannot know Him perfectly, one cannot see Him perfectly either, but for those full of ardent desire, there is opened a way so that that discovery and that seeing continually increases.

The true nature of infinite pleasure in Paradise is this. If this were not the case, surely the awareness of pleasure would depart, for one does not obtain pleasure from whatever is constant and to which the soul has become accustomed until something new reaches it. For this reason the delight of inhabitants of Paradise is renewed moment by moment, so that in the present, one sees the past as trivial. It increases day by day. Thou hast come to know the meaning of "familiarity" from this principle also, for familiarity augments the state of the soul by that which is present so that one does not pay attention to that which is left behind. If one pays attention, that state is "longing." Therefore, the lovers of God Most High in this world and the next move between familiarity and longing.

In the traditions of David (A), it is related that God Most High said: "O David, inform the inhabitants of the earth that I am the Friend of him who loves Me. I am the Companion of him who sits with Me in seclusion. I am the Intimate of him who becomes intimate by remembering Me. I am the Comrade of him who is My comrade. I am the Chooser of him who chooses Me. I am the Servant of him who serves Me. No servant has loved Me that I did not know that from his soul, and that I did not take (him) as a friend and preferred (him) above others.

Whoever seeks Me will truly find (Me); whoever seeks another will not find Me. O inhabitants of the earth! Continue not in those works by which ye have become beguiled! Turn towards companionship, sitting, and intimacy with Me. Become familiar with Me so that I may become familiar with you. I created the natural disposition of My friends from the natural disposition of Abraham (A) My friend, and Moses, My confidant, and Muhammad (S), My chosen one. I created the souls of my earnest desirers from My Own Light and nourished them with My Own Majesty."

Revelation came to some of the prophets: "I have servants who love Me and I love them. They yearn for Me and I yearn for them. They remember Me and I remember them. They look favorably upon Me and I look favorably upon them. If thou takest their way, I shall befriend thee; if thou turnest away from their way, I shall take thee as an enemy." Concerning love, familiarity, and longing there are many of these and their likes in the Traditions. Let this much suffice.

Disclosing the True Nature of Contentment and Its Virtue

Know that contentment with the decree of God Most High is the highest of stations. There is no station beyond that, for love is the supreme station; contentment with all that God Most High does is the fruit of love—not the fruit of just any love; rather, it is the fruit of a love which is at perfection.

Concerning this the Messenger (S) said: "*Contentment with the decree is the greatest gate of God.*" He said: "The greatest portal of God Most High is contentment with His decree." When the Messenger (S) asked some people: "What is the token of your faith?" They replied: "We are patient in adversity and we acquiesce with the decree (of God)." He said: "They are wise and learned. They are almost prophets in the greatness of their religious knowledge." And he (S) said: "When the Resurrection occurs, wings will be created for a group of my people so that they may fly to Paradise. The angels will say to them: 'Have ye seen the reckoning, the scales, and bridge (over hell)?' They say: 'We have seen nothing of all those things.' (The angels) will ask: 'Who are ye?' they reply: 'We are of the people of Muhammad (S).' Then (the angels) will say: 'What were your deeds that ye have found such favor?' They will reply: 'Amongst us, there were two traits: one was that we were ashamed before God Most High to commit sins in privacy; the other was that we were satisfied with the little sustenance that God Most High gave us.' The angels will say: 'Then, it is just that ye have this degree!'"

Some of the people of Moses (A) said to him: "Ask of God Most High in what does His pleasure lie so that we may do that." Revelation came: "Be pleased with Me so that I may be pleased with you."

Revelation came to David (A): "What have My saints to do with the sorrows of the world that that sorrow takes away the sweetness of their conversation (with God) from their souls? O David, I desire from My Own friends that they be spiritual. They should grieve for no thing and not tie their hearts to any thing of the world."

And (the Messenger) (S) said: "God Most High says; 'I am that God other than Whom there is no god. Say to whoever does not endure patiently My afflictions and does not give thanks for My blessings and does not acquiesce to My decree: 'Seek another god.'" And he (S) said: "God Most High says: 'I have allotted, I have set in order, I have made firm My handiwork. I have commanded all that one may want. Whoever is satisfied, he has My contentment; whoever is not satisfied, he has My anger, until that time when he sees Me.'" And he (S) said: "God Most High says: 'I have created good and evil. Blessed be he whom I created for good! I have made good easy on his hand. Woe unto him whom I have created for evil! I have made evil easy on his hand. Woe unto him who asks why and how!'"

One of the prophets was afflicted for twenty years with hunger, nakedness, and tribulation. He used to supplicate, but there was no answer. Then revelation came: "Before I created the heavens and the earth, this was thy share of My apportioning. Dost thou desire that I start over again the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the management of the kingdom and change what I have decreed so that it may be what thou desirest, not that which I desire, and that affairs become as thou likest, not I? By My power and My majesty, if this again occurs in thy soul, I shall erase thy name from the ledger of prophethood!"

Anas says: "I served the Messenger (S) for twenty years.[1754] He never asked: 'Why didst thou do that?' no matter what I did. He never asked: 'Why didst thou not do that?' about whatever I did not do. But, if a person were to quarrel with me, he would say: 'If it had been decreed, it would have happened.'" Revelation came to David (A): "O David, thou desirest and I desire; it is not other than I desire. If thou surrenderest, that which I desire will suffice thee for what thou desirest. If thou dost not surrender, I shall bring thee in grief to that which thou desirest and then it will not be other than that which I desire."

'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz said: "My joy is in that which is His decree, whatever that decree may be." He was asked: "What dost thou desire?" He replied: "That which He has decreed." Ibn Mas'ud says: "I prefer to eat fire than to say about something which is not: 'Would that it were!' or, about something which is: 'Would that it were not!'" One of the worshippers amongst the Children of Israel used to strive much in worship for a long time. In a dream, he saw: "Thy companion in Paradise

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[1754] The corresponding passage in *The Revival* has "ten years."

is such-and-such a woman." Then, he sought her to see her worship. He saw of her neither formal prayer at night nor fasting, not to speak of the (performance of the) religious obligations. He said: "Tell me, what are thy deeds?" She replied: "That which thou hast seen." With much insistence with "Well, tell me," she said: "There is a trait in me that if I am in calamity and illness, I do not wish to be in sound health. If I am in the sun, I do not wish to be in the shade. If I am in the shade, I do not wish to be in the sun. I am content with that which He has decreed." The devout man clasped his hand on his head and said: "This is not a trait; this is a great quality!"

The True Nature of Contentment

Know that some have said that contentment in adversity and everything that is contrary to desire is not possible; rather, the limit of that is patience. This is an error. Instead, if love has triumphed, contentment in opposition to desire is possible from two aspects:

One (aspect) is that one becomes so immersed and astonished with love that he is not aware of his own pain, just as the person who in battle is so occupied with anger that he does not feel the pain of wounds. He is wounded, but he has no inkling of that until he sees the blood with his own eyes. And there is the person who walks in some avarice[1755] and does not feel the thorns in his feet. When the soul is pre-occupied, there is no awareness of hunger or thirst.

Since all of these are possible in the love for the created and in worldly avarice, why is it not possible in the love for God Most High and the love for Hereafter? It is clear that the beauty of the form of inner qualities is greater than the beauty of the outer form, which in reality is a skin drawn over dung. The eye of insight, by which one perceives internal beauty, is clearer than the external eye which makes many mistakes so that it sees the large small and the distant near.

The other aspect is that one perceives the pain, but as one knows that the approval of the Friend lies in that, one is content. Just as when one's friend orders him to be bled[1756] or to take some bitter medicine, one is agreeable to that, in the eagerness that the satisfaction of the friend be obtained. Therefore, whoever knows that the approval of God Most High lies in that he be content with whatever God does to him in the way of poverty, illness, and calamity. He endures patiently and consents, as the person greedy for the world consents to the misery of travel, the peril of the seas, and laborious tasks. Many lovers have reached this degree.

[1755] "some avarice" (*hirsī*). AA has "some service" (*khidmati*).

[1756] "to be bled" medically.

(to us)? He has said that whoever acquiesces to (a sin) is a partner in it! And He has said that if a servant of God is slain in the east and some person in the west approves of that, he is a partner in that (crime).

Therefore, although sin is the decree of God Most High, yet it has two sides: one is the servant (of God)'s, and that of his choosing. Its sign is that it is hated by God. The other side is God's; it is His decree and apportioning. So, as for the aspect which has been decreed (by God)—so that the world not be devoid of sin and unbelief—one must be content with that. However, as for the aspect which is the free choice of the servant (of God), the character and sign of that is that God holds him in enmity (for that). One must not acquiesce to that. This is not contradictory. For, if the enemy of a person dies, but the enemy of his enemy remains, he is both saddened and happy, but the happiness is from one aspect and the sadness from another aspect. It would be contradictory if they were both from one aspect.

In the same manner, fleeing from a place where sin prevails is important, as He said: *Bring us out from this town of which the people are oppressors.* (Q. 4:75)[1763] The forefathers always fled from such cities, for sin is contagious. If it is not, its blight and punishment is. As He said: *And guard yourselves against a chastisement which cannot fall exclusively on those of you who are wrongdoers.* (Q. 8:25) If a person is in a place where his eye falls on someone not of the prohibited degrees, he should flee from that place. That is not opposition to contentment (with the decree of God). In the same way, if there is scarcity and famine in a city, it is permissible to go away from that place, except if there be a plague—that is prohibited because, should the healthy leave, the sick will remain lost.

As for other calamities, it is not the same. Instead, inasmuch as He has set the causes, one must comply according to the command and that which is His decree. Therefore, after thou hast complied with the command, one must be content and one must know that one's welfare lies in that. *Peace!*

[1763] This verse was revealed in the context of the early persecution of the Muslims by the people of Makkah, the circumstance that prompted the exodus from Makkah to Madinah (then called Yathrib) in CE 622. This event marks year 1 of the Islamic calendar.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCERNING THE REMEMBRANCE OF DEATH

Know that for whoever has come to know that the end of his affair in all circumstances is death, that his dwelling is the grave, and his guardians are Munkar and Nakir, and his rendezvous is the Resurrection, and his destination is heaven or hell—*We seek refuge with God!*—there is no consideration more important for him than the consideration of death. There is no planning more pressing for him than planning the provision for death, if he be intelligent. As the Messenger (S) said: "*Astute is he who has reined in his self and worked for what is after death.*" Whoever remembers death frequently will perforce busy himself with preparing the provisions for that. He will find the grave a garden of the gardens of Paradise. Whoever forgets death, all his ambition is (for) the world and he remains neglectful of the provisions for the Hereafter. He will find the grave a cavern of the caverns of hell. For this reason, remembering death is a great virtue.

The Messenger (S) said: "*Be frequent in the remembrance of the demolisher of (one's) being!*" "O ye people who are occupied with the pleasures of the world! Remember that which devastates all pleasures!" And he (S) said: "If animals were to know that which ye know about the account of death, people would not eat any fat meat."[1764] 'Ayishah (R) said: "O Messenger of God, is there anyone of the degree of the martyrs?" He answered: "There is: the person who remembers death twenty times a day." The Messenger (S) passed by some people whose laughter was loud. He said: "Mix into your gathering the remembrance of that which will darken all pleasures." They asked: "What is that?" He replied: "Death."

Anas (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "Multiply the remembrance of death; that will make thee an ascetic in this world and atone for thy sins." And he (S) said: "*In death there is a preaching.*" Death is enough to give counsel to mankind. The Companions (R) heaped much praise upon a person. The Messenger asked: "How is the talk about death on his soul?" They said: "We have not heard him mention death." He said: "Then, he is not as ye suppose him to be." And Ibn 'Umar (R) says: "I went to the Messenger (S) with ten persons. One of the Helpers asked (the Messenger): 'Who is the most astute and the most generous of the people?' He answered: 'He who remembers death frequently and who is active in preparing the provisions for the

[1764] That is, the animals which provide our supplies of meat would be emaciated from the anxiety about death.

Hereafter. They are the astute who carried the honor of the world and the munificence of the Hereafter.'"

Ibrahim Taymi says: "There are two things which take away the ease of the world from me: one is the remembrance of death, the other is the fear of standing before God Most High." Every evening, 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz assembled the jurisprudents and they would confer with talk of death and the Resurrection until they were weeping like people who have a corpse before them. When Hasan Basri held an assembly, his talk would all be of death, hell, and the Hereafter, and nothing else. A woman complained to 'Ayishah (R) of the hardness of her own heart. ('Ayishah) said: "Remember death often so that thou become compassionate." She did that and the hard-heartedness left her. She returned and gave thanks (to 'Ayishah).

Rabi' Khaytham had dug a grave in his dwelling. He would lie in it several times every day to renew his remembrance of death and would say: "If I forget death for an hour, my soul becomes black." Someone said to 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz: "Remember death frequently. If thou art in torment, that will console thy soul; if thou art in ease, it will render thee miserable." Abu Sulayman Darani says: I said to the mother of Harun:[1765] 'Dost thou love death?' She said: 'No.' I said: 'Why (not)?' She said: 'If I become a rebel in my humanness, I do not want to see Him. How can I desire to see the King Most High with many sins?'"

Excursus: [There Are Three Aspects to the Remembrance of Death][1766]

Know that there are three aspects to the remembrance of death:

ONE is the remembrance by the heedless. He is involved with the world. He remembers (death) and loathes it, fearing that he will be deprived of the carnal pleasures of the world. As a result, he despises death and says that it is a bad affair that is before (him) and, alas, that this world with all its delights must pass! Remembrance in this manner drives him far from God Most High. However, if in some manner the world becomes a cause of misery for him and his soul comes to loathe the world, it is not without benefit.

THE SECOND is the remembrance by the repenter. He does this so fear will have more domination over him and so that he will become firmer in (his) repentance and be more avid in mending the past. The spiritual reward for this is immense. The repenter does not loathe death,

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[1765] "the mother of Harun": This is not a reference to the mother of the Biblical Aaron (Ar. Hārūn). The Harun mentioned is someone else, a contemporary of Abu Sulayman Darani (see Note 574), quite possibly the caliph Harun al-Rashid (rgd. AH170/786CE to AH193/809CE).

[1766] From the AA text.

but he loathes the hastening of death, fearing that he will have to go unprepared. Loathing in this manner holds not harm.

THE THIRD is the remembrance by the knower. It is of the promise of the sight (of God) after death, and the rendezvous of the friend is not forgotten. It is always before one's eye. Moreover, he is in the hope of that. As Hudhayfah said at the time of death: "*The beloved has come at (the time of) want.*" The friend has come at the time of need. And he said: "O Lord God, if Thou knowest that I prefer poverty to riches, that I prefer illness to good health, that I prefer death to living, make my death easy so that I may obtain peace of mind by seeing Thee."

Beyond this degree, there is another degree, greater than this, (in) which one does not loathe death, nor does one seek it, nor does one desire either its hastening or its delay. Instead, one prefers that which God has decreed, and he has abandoned his own sway and necessity. He has reached the station of contentment and surrender. This is that time when death comes to his mind. He thinks about death in most states. For if, in this world, one is in (a state of) witnessing, and the remembrance of Him dominates the soul, death and life are both one to him. In all conditions, he will be immersed in the remembrance of God Most High.

THE REMEDY FOR THE REMEMBRANCE OF DEATH'S MAKING AN IMPRESSION UPON THE SOUL

Know that death is a tremendous matter and a great danger, but the people are heedless of that. If they do remember it, it does not make an impression on their souls either; for their souls are so immersed in the business of the world that there is no room left for anything else. For this reason, they obtain no pleasure in the praising and remembrance of God Most High. For this reason, the remedy for this is that one seek solitude and empty the soul for an hour to take care of this—as the person who wants to cross a desert empties his soul of all things for the planning of that—and one says to oneself that death is near and it may be that it will be today. If thou art told to go to a dark vestibule [1767] where thou dost not know whether there is a well in the vestibule or a stone on the way, or some void, thou will be very fearful and thy boldness will depart. Well, the obscurity of thine affair after death and thy danger in the grave is not less than that. How dost thou dare to neglect this?

The best remedy for this is that one consider one's own contemporaries who have died. Recall their images: how each one of them was in his own dignity and affairs. How excessive was their delight in the world! How heedless of death they were! Then, suddenly death came and stole them away, a people unprepared. Now, they are in (their)

[1767] "the vestibule" (*bālān*): A space between two doors or the outer gate and the house.

graves. How their bodies and limbs have fallen apart! What use are the worms fallen upon their flesh, skin, eyes, and ears making (of them)! They have fallen to this state. Their heirs have divided their wealth and are eating well. Their wives are walking abroad with different husbands and have forgotten them. So, one should meditate upon his contemporaries, one by one, about their recreation, laughter, and negligence; (about) their occupation with the management of affairs so that they labored much for twenty years to achieve what they desired—and their shrouds were being washed in the fuller's shop while they were unaware. Then, one says to oneself: "Thou, too, are like them, and thy heedlessness, greed, and stupidity is like their heedlessness. This good fortune has appeared to thee, that they have gone before thee so that thou mayest learn a lesson. *Fortunate is he who is given counsel through another.*[1768]

Then, one looks at one's hands, feet, fingers, (and toes),[1769] and at ones eyes and tongue and reflects: all of these will come apart, one from another. Very soon, they will become the fodder of worms. One imagines one's image in the grave: stinking, spoiled carrion, collapsed upon itself. Tell thyself these and their like for an hour each day. Perhaps one will find some awareness of death inside one, because the remembrance of the external has no effect upon the soul. A person always see a corpse being carried and he always thinks of himself as looking on. He thinks that he will be a spectator at death. He has never seen himself dead, and whatever one has not seen, does not come to the imagination. About this, the Messenger (S) said in a sermon: "Thou speakest the truth! This death has not been ordained for us. Thou speakest the truth! These corpses that are being carried are travelers who will soon return. They will bury them in the earth and they will devour their inheritance; and they are heedless about their own (fate)!" Most reasons for not remembering death are the length of hope, and that is the root of all corruptions.

Disclosing the Virtue of Short Hopes

Know that from whoever [imagines in his soul][1770] that he will have a long life and that his turn for death will be long delayed, no (beneficial) religious act will come. He says to himself: "There is a (long) time ahead of me. Thou wilt be able to repent and worship whenever thou wishest," and immediately he takes up the way of ease. In

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[1768] Al-Ghazzali follows the Arabic with a Persian translation, omitted here.

[1769] "fingers, (and toes)": In Persian, the same word (*angushtān*) is used for both. Since both hands and feet have been mentioned, we may assume that Al-Ghazzali is referring to the digits of both pairs of limbs.

[1770] From the AA text.

any case, when he supposes his death to be near, he busies himself with planning, and this is the root of all kinds of happiness. The Messenger (S) said to 'Umar: "When thou arisest in the morning, say not to thyself that thou wilt be alive in the evening. In the evening, say not to thyself that thou wilt be alive in the morning. Take the provision for death from life. Take the provisions for illness from good health, for thou knowest not what will happen to thy reputation with God Most High tomorrow." And he (S) said: "I do not fear anything for you as much as I fear two traits: following passions and holding the hope for a long life."

Usamah[1771] bought something on a month's credit. The Messenger (S) said: "Art thou not astonished by Usamah who has bought something on a month's credit? *Verily Usamah has long hopes.* Surely, Usamah has a long hope in life! By that God at Whose command is the breath of Muhammad, I do not close my eyes when I do not suppose that death will come (upon me) before I open them (again). I do not put a bite of food in my mouth when I do not suppose that it may remain in my throat because of death." Then, he said: "O people! If ye have intelligence, consider yourselves dead. By that God at Whose command is the soul of Muhammad, that which has been promised you will come and ye will not obtain any release from it." The Messenger (S), when he spilled water (for purification) would immediately perform the dry purification. They would say that there is water nearby. He would say: "Perhaps I shall not live until we reach the water."

'Abdullah Mas'ud[1772] says: "The Messenger (S) drew a square and (then) drew a straight line in the middle of that. From both sides of that line, he drew short lines, and he also drew another line outside that square. He said: 'The line that is inside the square is a human being. The square is the hour of death enclosing him and from which he may not leap out. The short lines on both sides of him (are) the hardships and calamities of his passage. When he escapes one, he falls into another, until he falls down—the falling of death. This line outside the square is his hope and expectation, for he always thinks of some matter that, in the knowledge of God Most High, will be after this death."[1773]

And the Messenger (S) said: "A human being becomes older each day while two things of his become younger: the necessity for wealth and the necessity for life." In the Traditions, it is related: "Jesus

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[1771] Usamah: Usāmah bin Zayd bin Hārithah, a Companion of the Prophet and one of his clients. On the day that the Prophet conquered Makkah, he accompanied the Prophet into the Ka'bah and broke up the idols with him. He was the son of the Prophet's freed slave Zayd and was called the Love of the Messenger of God (*hubb rasūl Allāh*) because of the Prophet's affection for him. He died AH54/674CE.

[1772] 'Abdullah Mas'ud: See Ibn Mas'ud.

[1773] That is, he is planning for some future thing in the expectation of living to accomplish it, while God knows that he will die before that time.

(A) saw an old man working with a spade in his hand. (Jesus) said: 'O Lord God, take hope away from him.' (The old man) dropped the spade and lay down. When an hour had passed, (Jesus) said: 'O Lord God, give him hope.' The old man stood up and resumed work. Jesus (A) asked (the old man): 'What was this?' He answered: 'It came in my soul: why am I working? Thou hast become old and will die soon. I put the spade down. Then, it came again in my soul: Thou wilt certainly need bread until thou diest. I stood up again (to work).'"

The Messenger (S): "Desire ye to go to Paradise?" They said: "We so desire." He said: "Shorten your hope and hold death before your eyes continuously. Have shame before God Most High as is due Him." An old man from Rayy[1774] wrote a letter to someone: "After (the salutation), the world is a dream and the Hereafter is awakening and in between is death. All that we are in is confused dreams.

Disclosing the Reasons for Long Hopes

Know that a human being pictures a long life in his soul for two reasons: one is ignorance and the other is the love for this world:

AS FOR THE LOVE FOR THIS WORLD, when it has become dominant, death will take away that friend[1775] from him. He will certainly become (death's) enemy and will not be agreeable to it. A human being tosses away all that is not agreeable to him and deceives himself. He pictures all that conforms to his desires in his soul. So, he always supposes that life, wealth, wife, children, and worldly chattels will not cease and he forgets the death which is contrary to his aim. If it occurs to his mind some times, he procrastinates. He says: "Be patient, O man, there is time ahead to prepare for the matter of death." When he matures, he says: "Be patient, O man, until thou becomest old." When he becomes old, he says: "As long as thou hast this life, thou mayst prepare the chattels for this child, thou shouldst get a wife for this son, and (then) thou mayest empty thy heart of them; and thou mayest drain the water from this property so that thy mind will be at ease with regard to food. Then, thou wilt take pleasure in worship. And thou shouldst chastise that enemy who rejoiced at thy misfortune!"

In that manner, he delays until he is at leisure, but from each task, ten more tasks are born. This fool does not know that he will never be free of the world, except by leaving it. So, he supposes that he will have free time, and he delays in the same way, day after day, until

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[1774] Rayy: the classical Rhages, now a suburb of Tehran. Before the rise of Tehran as the capital of Iran under the Qajars in the late 18th CE century, Rayy was the chief city of north-central Iran for at least two millennia.

[1775] "friend": that is, the world.

suddenly death appears and he is left in regret. It is for this that most of the cries from hell are about procrastination. The root of all of these is the love for the world and the neglect of that which the Messenger (S) said: "Love as much as thou wishest; it will be taken from thee."

AS FOR IGNORANCE, it is that one place confidence in youth and not know this much: that before one dies, a thousand children and young people will die and the number old people in the town will decrease, because they do not reach old age, save a few. Also, he supposes that in good health sudden death is remote. He does not know even this much that sudden death is rare, but sudden illness is not remote. All sicknesses are unexpected and when sickness comes, death may come. Moreover, fever is the predecessor of death and the death of a sick person is not unusual.

Therefore, the planning for death must always be placed before one, but like the sun that will quickly fall upon it, not like a shadow that always goes before one and that is never reached.

THE REMEDY FOR LONG HOPES

Know that remedy is the repelling of the causes. When thou hast known the cause, one must occupy oneself in warding it off.

Now, we have stated the remedy for the love for the world in the chapter about Love.[1776] In short, whoever knows the world well does not love it, for he knows that its pleasures are but for a few days and they will necessarily be canceled by death. At the same time, (the world) itself is miserable and loathsome and not devoid of grief, and a person is never free of those. Whoever contemplates the length of time of the Hereafter and the brevity of the life in this world knows that selling the Hereafter for this world is like the person who prefers a dirham in a dream to a dinar when awake, for the world is like a dream: *The people are asleep; when they die, they will awaken.*

As for ignorance, one treats it with pure thoughts and true spiritual insight, for one knows that since death is not under one's control, it will not come at the time one wishes (it to do so), so that one could place any confidence in youth or other matters.

THE DEGREES OF LONG HOPES

Know that people differ in this. There is the person who wants to be in the world forever, as God Most High said: *(Each one) would like to be allowed to live for a thousand years.* (Q. 2:96) And there is the person

[1776] The preceding chapter.

who desires to attain old age. And there is the person who has hope for no more than a year and does not plan for the following year. And there is the person who has no hope beyond today and does not plan for tomorrow. As Jesus (A) said: "Be not anxious about the sustenance of tomorrow, for if death remains (away), sustenance also remains. If life does not remain, why bear the sorrow of life and the sustenance of others?"

And there is the person who does not even have hope for an hour, just as when the Messenger (S) performed the dry ablution when the water was spilled lest he not (live long enough to) reach water. And there is the person for whom death is before his eye and never absent, as when the Messenger (S) asked Mu'adh about the true nature of his faith. (Mu'adh) said: "I do not lift a foot (to step) that I do not suppose that I will never lift another." Aswad the Ethiopian[1777] was performing formal prayer. He was looking from side to side. He was asked: "Why art thou looking about?" He replied: "I am looking to see from which direction the Angel of Death shall appear."

In sum, people differ in this. For everyone whose hope does not exceed a month, there is an excellence superior to him whose hope is for forty days and the effect of that will appear in his behavior. A person for whom two brothers are absent—one who will arrive in a month, the other in a year—makes arrangements for the one who will arrive in a month and delays the arrangements for the other. Thus, there is the person who supposes his hope is short, but whose sign is beginning early, hastening in work, and in considering each breath—one by one—a booty [1778] giving him a reprieve. As the Messenger (S) said: "Take five things before five things as booty: youth before old age, good health before illness, wealth before poverty, leisure before occupation, and life before death." And he (S) said: "There are two blessings of which most people are cheated: good health and leisure." And when he (S) would see the signs of heedlessness among the Companions, he would cry among them: "Death has come and has brought either happiness or hardship."

Hudhayfah says: "There is not a day when at dawn a crier does not cry: "O people, *set out! Set out!*" Dawud Tayi was seen hastening to formal prayer. He was asked: "What haste is this?" He replied: "There is an army waiting for me at the city gate—he meant the dead in the graveyard. Until I am taken or not taken, I shall not rise from that place." Abu Musa Ash'ari strove earnestly at the end of his life. They asked him: "What would happen if thou wert to be gentle (with thyself)?" He said:

[1777] Aswad the Ethiopian: *Aswad-i Habashī*. There are a number of Aswads in the *Sirah*, but none seem to bear the epithet "Ethiopian" indicating a non-Arab origin. Although Aswad is here used as a proper name, it means "black."

[1778] "booty" (*ghanīmat*): an unexpected good fortune; loot taken in war, plunder, spoils. Ghazzali is using it in the sense of an unexpected good fortune.

"Horses that are raced make their greatest effort at the end of the course, and this is the end of the course of my life. Death is come near; I shall not refrain from any effort."

Disclosing the Agonies of Death and the Hardship of Dying

Know that if a human being had nothing before him except the tearing out of the soul and the hardship of that, he ought to find no pleasure in the world for fear of that—if he had intelligence. For, if he fears that a Turk will enter his house to strike him with an iron-headed mace, he would not have any pleasure in eating and sleeping for fear of that. It may be that (the Turk) will not come, but the coming of the Angel of Death and his taking (one's) life is certain. This is surely more terrifying than the mace of a Turk. Moreover, not fearing (death) is because of heedlessness. The pain of dying is so great that all are in agreement that it is more difficult than that a person be cut to pieces with swords, or that he be torn in two. (This is) because the pain of a wound is from that place where the wound is struck. Awareness reaches the soul and it is apparent how much pain the soul experiences from the sword in the place of the wound. From this the pain increases, moving to all one's parts.

The tearing out of the soul is a pain that appears in the soul itself; all of its parts are drowned in it. The silence of that person is from powerlessness, for his tongue is struck dumb by its severity and the intellect is stupefied. The person knows this who has tasted it, or knows and experiences it by the light of prophethood before tasting it. As Jesus (A) says: "O disciples, offer supplication that God Most High make the giving up of the ghost easy for me; for I so fear death that I shall die of the fear of dying." And at that time, our Messenger (S) was repeating: "*O God, make easy upon Muhammad the agony of death.*" 'Ayishah says: "I have no hope for anyone whose dying is easy. I saw the hardship of the dying of the Messenger (S). During that time he was saying: 'O Lord God, when Thou bringest out the soul from among the bones and nerves, make easy upon me this suffering.'" The Messenger (S) described that pain and said: "Every dying is like three hundred blows with a sword." And he (S) said: "The easiest death is like the thorn which hangs from wool (fabric) and is impossible to remove from it easily until it is pulled and all of the fibers and its parts unravel."

The Messenger (S) went to a sick person at the time of the agony of death and said: "I know what kind of pain is within him; there is not a vein in his body that is not a separate agony." 'Ali (R) said: "Fight in battle until ye are killed, for a thousand blows of the sword is easier for

me than dying."[1779] Jesus (A) passed through a cemetery with a group of the Children of Israel. They offered supplications until God Most High brought (one of the dead) back to life. He said: "O people! What do ye want of me? It is has been fifty years since I died, and the bitterness of the agony of death is still with me."

In the Traditions, it is related: "The agony of death for the believer for whom degrees in heaven remain (to be earned) is hard for him until he achieves them. The agony of death of the unbeliever who has done good works is made easy in exchange for any right due him." In the Traditions, it is related that sudden death is the ease of the believer and envy of the sinner." And in the Traditions, it is related: "When Moses (A) died, God Most High said to him: 'How didst thou find thyself in death? (Moses) answered: 'Like a bird being roasted alive; it cannot fly, nor can it die to escape.'" 'Umar asked Ka'b Ahbar: "What is the agony of dying like?' (Ka'b) replied: "As though a thorny branch has been put inside a person, each thorn clinging to a vein, and a powerful man is pulling it out."

The Calamities of the Agony of Dying

Know that besides this pain, there are three calamities of terror awaiting one:

One (calamity) is that the form of the Angel of Death is seen. In the Traditions, it is related: "Abraham (A) said to the Angel of Death: 'I desire to see thee in that form when thou takest back the lives of sinners.' (The angel) said: 'Thou dost not have the strength to endure that.' (Abraham) said: 'It cannot be helped.'[1780] (The angel) showed himself in that form to him. (Abraham) saw a black person, stinking, hair standing on end, wearing black garments, smoke and fire coming out of his nose and mouth. Abraham (A) fell down unconscious. When he came to his senses, the Angel of Death had resumed his own form. (Abraham) said: 'O Angel of Death! If a rebel (against) God were to see nothing other than thy form, it would be enough!'" Know that the devout will be saved from this terror, for they will see him in a better form, so that if none were to see any comfort except his beauty and form, it will suffice.

Solomon the son of David (A) said to the Angel of Death: "Why art thou not equal among mankind? One thou dost carry off quickly and another thou passest over for a long time." He answered: "This is not in my hands. I am given a paper with the name of each one. I do as I am commanded."

[1779] 'Ali (R) was struck by the poisoned sword of an assassin in the month of Ramadan AH40/661CE. He died three days later at the age of 59.

[1780] "It cannot be helped": that is, "Nonetheless I must see it."

Wahb bin Munabbih (R) says: "One day a king, intending to go for a ride, ordered garments to be brought. He donned one which was finer and in the same way, they brought horses, until he mounted one which was finer and went out with a great entourage. Out of pride, he would not look at anyone. The Angel of Death came before him in the shape of a poor man in dirty clothes. He greeted (the king). The king did not respond. (The angel) seized the reins of the horse. (The king) said: 'Let go! Dost thou know what thou art doing?' (The angel) said: 'O king, I have some business with thee.' (The king) said: 'Wait until I dismount.' (The angel) said: 'No! Now!' (The King) said: 'Speak.' He brought his head to the (king's) ear and said: 'I am the Angel of Death. I have come to take thy soul at this moment.' The king grew pale and his tongue would not work. He said: 'Give me leave to return home so as to bid my wife and children farewell.' (The angel) said: 'No. I shall take thy soul right now.' Having said that, he seized his soul, and (the king) fell off the horse. (The angel) left that place. He saw a believer and said: 'I have a secret for thee.' (The believer) asked: 'What is it?' (The angel) said: 'I am the Angel of Death.' (The believer) said: 'Welcome! It has been a long time that I have been awaiting thee. No one dearer to me than thou will ever come. Here! Take my soul!' (The angel) said: 'Sit down. First take care of the needs and the work that thou havest.' (The believer) said: 'I have no work more important than seeing my Lord. (The angel) said: 'Now, I shall take thy soul in whatever state thou desirest.' (The believer) said: 'Wait until I perform an ablution and stand in formal prayer. When I have prostrated myself, take my soul.' And he did thus."

And Wahb bin Munabbih said: "In some land, there was a king than who no one was greater. The Angel of Death seized his soul. When he went to heaven, the angels said: 'O Angel of Death, hast thou never felt mercy for the person whose soul thou takest?' He answered: 'There was woman in the desert, pregnant. She gave birth to a boy. I was commanded to take the life of the mother. I took the soul of the mother of that child and I left the infant lost in the desert. I felt compassion for that child and his mother, the (the child) remained lost in that loneliness and weakness.' The angels said to the Angel of Death: 'Didst thou see that king with all that greatness, like no other on the face of the earth, whose soul thou just tookest?' He answered: 'I did.' They said: 'He was that child thou didst leave wandering in the desert.' (The Angel of Death) exclaimed: "*Glory be to the Gracious One for what He wills!*"

In the Traditions, it is related that on the night of the middle of (the month) of Sha'ban[1781] a paper is given to the Angel of Death. The name of every person whose soul is to be taken in the coming year is

[1781] Sha'bān: the eighth month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

written upon that sheet: one builds, one weds, one litigates—yet their names are written on that (paper).

A'mash says: "The Angel of Death went to Solomon (A). He stared at one of (Solomon's) boon companions. When (the angel) had gone out, the boon companion asked (Solomon): 'Who was that who was staring at me? (Solomon) said: 'The Angel of Death.' (The companion) said: 'Is it that he will take my soul? Command the wind to carry me to India so that, if he returns, he will not see me.' (Solomon) commanded the wind to do that. Afterwards, the Angel of Death returned immediately. Solomon (A) asked him: 'What was the reason for thy staring repeatedly at my boon companion?' (The angel) answered: 'I had been commanded to take his soul at that moment in India while he was here. I asked myself how he could travel to India in an hour. I was astonished when I went there and found him there. I took his soul.'" The point of this story is that there is no escaping the meeting with the Angel of Death.

THE SECOND CALAMITY is seeing the two angels who are appointed over every person. In the Traditions, it is related that both come with death to see him. They say to the servant of God, if he is devout: "*May God reward thee with good!* Thou hast performed many acts of devotion in front of us and thou hast delivered much ease to us." But, if the servant is a rebel (against God), they say: "*May God not reward thee with good!* Thou hast committed many disgraceful acts and sins in front of us. This is at that moment in the agony of death when the servant (of God) looks outside at the air, his eyes not yet shut.

THE THIRD CALAMITY is that, at the time of dying, he sees his place in heaven or hell, for the Angel of Death says to the devout: "Good news to the friend of God! Thou art bound for heaven!" And to the sinner, he says: "Good news to the enemy of God! Thou art bound for hell!" The pain of this is added to the pain of the agony of dying. And, *the refuge is with God*, these are the terrors one sees in the world, and they are trivial (in comparison) with what he will see in the grave and after that.

DISCLOSING THE WORDS OF THE GRAVE WITH THE CORPSE

The Messenger (S) said: "At the time when the corpse is placed in the grave, the grave says: '*Woe unto thee*, O son of Adam! In what deception hast thou come to me? Didst thou not know that I am the house of misery, the house of darkness, the house of loneliness, and the house of worms? By what wert thou deceived? When passing over me wonderingly, thou wert placing one foot before me and the one after (me)!' If he is a righteous, a person answers on his behalf: 'What art thou

saying, O grave? He has been just and has enjoined good and prohibited evil.' (The grave) says: 'Surely, I shall transform into a green garden for him! Then, his body will become a luminous light and his soul will go to heaven.'"

In the Traditions, it is related that when the corpse is placed in the grave and it is tormented, its neighbors (in the graveyard) call out to it: "O straggler, thou at least wert left behind and we came before. Why didst thou not learn a lesson from us? Didst thou not see that we came before and our deeds were cut off and thou hadst received a respite? Why didst thou not provide for that which was lost to us?" In that way, all corners of the ground will cry out: "O deceived by the appearance of the world! Why didst thou not take a lesson from those who have gone before thee and who were deceived as thou wert?"

In the Traditions, it is related that when a befitting servant (of God) is placed in the grave, his good deeds surround him and take him down, protecting him. When the angels of torment appear at his feet, formal prayer stands forward and says: "No! He has stood much for the sake of God Most High." When they come from the side of the head, fasting says: "No! He has endured much thirst in the world." When they appear from the side of his body, Pilgrimage and fighting in defense of the faith say: "No! He has suffered much in his body." When they appear from the direction of his hands, charity says: "No! Withhold your hands from him, for he has given away much with that hand." The angels say: "Be happy and blessed!" The angels of mercy come and lay a carpet from heaven in his grave and they make the grave as broad and open for him as the eye can see. They bring a lamp of the light of heaven so that he may be in its light until the Day of Resurrection.

'Abdullah bin 'Ubayd[1782] says that The Messenger (S) said: "When the corpse is placed in the grave, it hears the sound of the footsteps of the people who had come following the bier. No one says anything to him except the grave, which says: 'Have they not told thee much about my nature, terror, and narrowness? Now, what hast thou brought for me?'"

The Questioning by Munkar and Nakir

The Messenger (S) says: "When a servant (of God) dies and is placed in the grave two angels come, both with black faces and blue eyes. The name of one is Munkar and the name of the other is Nakir.[1783] They say: 'What dost thou say about the Messenger?' If he is a believer,

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[1782] 'Abdullāh bin 'Ubayd: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1783] Munkar and Nakir: see Note 353 in the First Pillar.

he says: 'He was the servant of God; he was the Messenger of God, and I testify that God is One and Muhammad is His Messenger.' Then the grave broadens for him to seventy cubits by seventy cubits[1784] and becomes flooded with light. They say: 'Sleep.' He says: 'Let me go to my own people and speak with them.' They say: 'Sleep as brides sleep, a sleeping in which nothing will awaken thee except those whom thou lovest.' But, if he is hypocrite, he answers: 'I do not know, but I have heard from people who said something and I said it too.' Then, they say to the earth: 'Come together.' It contracts upon him until all his sides reach each other and he remains suffering thus until the Resurrection.

And the Messenger (S) said to 'Umar: "O 'Umar, how dost thou see thyself when thou diest and thy folk place thee in a grave four cubits by a cubit and a half?[1785] At that time, they will wash thee and put a shroud (on thee), place thee in the grave, fill it with earth and go away. Friends will come to the grave—Munkar and Nakir—their voices like thunder, their eyes like lightning, their hair trailing on the ground. They thrust aside the earth of the grave with their teeth and seize thee and shake thee.' He said: 'O Messenger of God, will I have my reason?' He said: 'Yes.' ('Umar) said: 'Then I shall have no fear and I will suffice for them.'"

In the Traditions, it is related: "Two beasts are put in charge of the unbeliever in the grave, both blind and deaf. In the hand of each one is a staff of iron. They will beat him on the head, as on a bucket with which water is given to camels, until the Resurrection. They have neither eyes to see and have mercy, nor ears to heed his cries." 'Ayishah (R) says: "The Messenger (S) said: 'The grave presses so as to press the corpse. If anyone has ever escaped that, it would be Sa'd bin Mu'adh.'" Anas (R) says: "Zaynab, the daughter of the Messenger (S), received the command. She was placed in the grave and the face of the great Messenger (S) became pale. When he came away, his color became normal again. We asked: 'O Messenger of God, what happened?' He said: 'I recalled the falling into the grave and its torment. I was informed that they had been easy with her. With all that, the pressure pressed her grave so that its noise was hear throughout the world.'" And the Messenger (S): "The torment of the unbeliever in the grave is that ninety-nine monstrous reptiles[1786] are appointed over him. Dost thou know what those monstrous reptiles are? Each is a snake with nine heads. They bite him, they lick him, they blow upon him until on the Day of Resurrection." And the Messenger (S) said: "The grave is the first house

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[1784] There are roughly two cubits to the yard, so the grave becomes about 35 yards square: approximately a quarter of an acre.

[1785] Al-Ghazzali uses another word for "cubit" here: *gaz*. The grave is thus about six feet by two and one quarter feet.

[1786] "monstrous reptiles": Ghazzali uses the word *azhdahā*, often translated "dragon."

of the houses of the Hereafter. If it is passed easily, then that which follows it will be easier. If it is difficult, that which follows it will be harder and more difficult."

Know that which follows this: First, the terror of the trumpet's blast; then, the terror of the Day of Resurrection: its length, heat, and sweat; then, the terror of the presentation of the review and the questioning about sins; then, the terror of the giving of the scrolls into the right hand and the left hand; then, the terror of disgrace and shame that will appear from that; then, the terror of the (weighing in the) scales, as to whether the pan of good deeds is heavier than the pan of bad deeds; then, the terror of the grievances of opponents and the answering to them; then the terror of the (narrow) bridge (that spans the fires of hell); then, the terror of hell and its guardians, fetters, neck-chains, (the tree of) *Zaqqum*,[1787] the fire-pit, snakes, scorpions, and torments. The torments are of two kinds: physical and spiritual. We have related the physical punishments at the end of *The Revival* in detail—we related all that has come down about them. As for those which are spiritual, we have related them in the Prolegomena of this work. In the same way, we have discussed the true nature of the reason for death, the true nature of the soul and its states after death—all in the Prolegomena. Whoever desires to learn the details of the physical punishment should refer to *The Revival*. Whoever desires to know the spiritual punishment should refer to the Prolegomena of this work, because recounting them in this book[1788] would be difficult, and we shall content ourselves with the amount that has been noted here lest the book become (too) lengthy.

(Visions of the Saints Concerning the Dead)

Let us conclude the book with stories of the visions that the saints have seen concerning the states of the dead.

Know that there is no way for the inhabitants of this world to the knowledge of the states of the dead except by means of inner revelation, either in dreams or while awake. Moreover, there is no way to them by means of the senses; for (those states) are in another world and all of (our physical) senses are deprived of perceiving them, as the ear is deprived of the perception of colors and the eye is deprived of the perception of sounds. Indeed, there is in a human being a special faculty by which one may see the inhabitants of the other world; however, that special attribute is hidden by the crowding of the senses and the (distracting) business of

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[1787] "the tree of *zaqqūm*": mentioned in the Quran in three places (37:62; 44:43; 56:52), a tree called the "food of the sinner" in Q. 44:44. Traditions and Commentators have elaborated and amplified its unpleasantnesses.

[1788] Here, Ghazzali is speaking of the Prolegomena as though it were a separate unit from the four Books of the main body of the text.

the world. When one finds release from that business in sleep, one's state grows closer to them, and their states stand revealed. It is also through that special faculty that they are informed of us so that they may delight in our good deeds and sorrow at our sins, as has been related in the Traditions.

The fact is that our knowledge of them and their knowledge of us are not without the intermediacy of the Preserved Tablet, for our states and their states are inscribed upon the Preserved Tablet. When that connection falls to the mind of a human being in sleep, he learns of their states from over there; and when that connection falls to them, they learn of our states. The similitude of the Preserved Tablet is a mirror in which are the forms of all things. The human soul is also like a mirror, as are the souls of the dead. Therefore, just as the reflection of something appears in another mirror, it appears in us and in them by means of the Preserved Tablet.

Do not suppose that Preserved Tablet is a physical (body), rectangular, (made of) wood, cane, or something else that one would be able to see with the external eye and to read what is inscribed upon it. Instead, if thou desirest to learn a similitude for it, search in thyself too, for the parallel of all that is in creation has been placed in thee, so that by their means there is a way to the knowledge of all of them. However, since thou art heedless of thy self, how dost thou come to know this? The illustration of this is the brain of the reciter of the Quran who has memorized the entire Quran. Thou mayst say that it is all inscribed in his brain and he looks at it and the letters, but if a person cuts his brain into tiny pieces and examines them with the external eye, he will not see the Quran, nor will he see the writing.

Therefore, thou must consider the inscribing of affairs on the Preserved Tablet as being of this kind, for unlimited matters have been inscribed upon it, while thine eye is nothing other than finite. The infinite in the finite in a perceptible form is not possible and it cannot take form (in it). Consequently, His Tablet, His pen, and His hand resemble nothing of thine, just as He does not resemble thee. Instead, it is as has been said: "Everything of the house resembles (its) master."

The point of this is that thou not consider it impossible for (the dead) to have knowledge of us and for us of them, as we see in dreams. Seeing the dead in dreams in good states and bad states is a great proof of their being alive, either in ease or in torment. It is not that they are not, and it is not that they are dead. As He said: *Think not that those who are slain in the way of God as dead. Nay! They are living; they have provision with their Lord.* (Q. 3:169)

Disclosing the States of the Dead Which Have Been Revealed Through Dreams

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever sees me in a dream has seen me, for Satan cannot come in my image." 'Umar (R) said: "I saw the Messenger (S) in a dream, his head heavy over me. I asked: 'What has happened?' He said: 'Art thou not the one who kissed his family[1789] while fasting?'" 'Umar had never done such a thing, even though it was not prohibited; but not doing so is better. Leniency in such details is not given to the truly righteous, even though it is to others.

'Abbas (R) says: "I had a friendship with 'Umar. I wanted to see him after his death, so after a year I saw him. He was scraping his eyes. He said: 'I have just now been released. My affair was in danger had it not been that the Lord was generous.'" 'Abbas says: "I saw Abu Lahab in a dream. He was burning in fire. I asked: 'How is it with thee?' He replied: 'I am always in torment except on Monday eves[1790] because the Messenger (S) was born on a Monday eve. I was given the good news of that and out of that joy, I had freed a slave. As the spiritual reward of that, the torment is taken away on Monday eves.'"

'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz says: "I saw the Messenger (S) in a dream sitting with Abu Bakr and 'Umar. When I sat with them suddenly 'Ali (R) and Mu'awiyah were brought, sent into a room, and the door closed. When I saw him after he had come out, he said: "*By the Lord of the Ka'bah, it was decided for me!*" That is: "My right was established." Then Mu'awiyah came out quickly and said: "*By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I was forgiven!*" That is: "I was forgiven and pardoned."[1791]

Before Husayn was killed, Ibn 'Abbas once woke up from sleep and said: "*Verily we belong to God and to him we are returning.*" (Q. 2:156) They asked: "What happened?" He said: "They have killed Husayn." They said: "What dost thou know?" He said: "I saw the Messenger (S), a drinking glass (filled with) blood with him. He said: 'Dost thou not see what my people have done after me? They have killed my (grand)son Husayn and this is his blood and that of his companions. In complaint of (that) tyranny, I am taking it before God Most High.' Then, twenty-four days later the news came that (Husayn) had been killed."

[1789] "family" here is a euphemism for "wife" or "women."

[1790] "Monday eves": that is Sunday evenings. According to the Islamic (and Jewish) calendar, the day starts at sundown. Hence, the European New Year's Eve and Christmas Eve.

[1791] This refers to the dispute over the succession to the caliphate between 'Ali and Mu'awiyah that culminated in the battle of Siffin in CE 648 and the assassination of 'Ali in CE 661. See any standard reference on Islamic history.

(Abu Bakr) Siddiq was seen in a dream. They said to him: "Thou didst always point to thy tongue and say: 'This has put matters before me.'" He replied: "Yes, because of the *there is no god but God* I used to say, heaven has been placed before me." Yusuf bin al-Husayn[1792] was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God Most High done with thee?" He answered: "He has been merciful." He was asked: "For what?" He said: "Because I never mixed the serious with jesting."

Mansur bin Isma'il[1793] says: "I saw 'Abdullah Bazzaz[1794] in a dream. I asked: 'What has God Most High done with thee?' He answered: 'He forgave me for all the sins I have confessed, except one sin which I was ashamed to confess. He stood me in sweat until the flesh fell off me.' I said: 'What was that?' He said: 'Once I looked at a boy and found him handsome. I was ashamed to confess that.'"

Abu Ja'far Saydalani[1795] says: 'I saw the Messenger (S) in a dream. A group of the poor, that is, Sufis, were sitting with him. Two angels descended from heaven, one with a ewer in his hand, and the other with a basin in his. The Messenger (S) washed his hands and the poor washed theirs. Then, they placed it before me so that I might wash my hands. One said: 'Do not pour water for him, for he is not one of them.' I said: 'O Messenger of God, it is related that thou hast said: 'Whoever loves a people is of them, and I love these people.' The Messenger (S) said: 'Pour water, for he is of them.'"

Majma'[1796] was seen in a dream. He was asked: "How didst thou find thine affair?" He said: "The ascetics have carried off the good of the world and the Hereafter." Zurarah bin Abi Awfi[1797] was seen in a dream. He was asked: "Of deeds, what hast thou found better?" He replied: "Contentment with the decree of God and short hope."

[1792] Yusuf bin al-Husayn: Yūsuf bin al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī, Abū Yaʿqūb, a 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century disciple of Dhu al-Nun (see Note 789). He served a large number of shaykhs. (Hujwiri)

[1793] Mansur bin Isma'il: Abū al-Hasan Manṣūr bin Ismāʿīl bin ʿUmar al-Tamīmī al-Miṣrī, a noted Shafi'ite theologian and jurisprudent. Born at Ra's 'Ayn in Syria, he studied with Shafi'i's companions and then settled in Egypt, hence the sobriquet *al-Misrī* (the Egyptian). He died AH306/918CE.

[1794] ʿAbdullāh Bazzāz: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1795] Abu Ja'far Saydalani: Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad bin al-Misbāḥ al-Saydalānī, a late 4th or early 5th Islamic (10th CE) century follower of the teachings of Husayn Hallaj (see Note 1685). Hujwiri considers him a great shaykh with many disciples, established in Syria-Iraq and a "modern," though deceased by his time.

[1796] Majmaʿ: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1797] Zurārah bin Abī Awfī: an early Shiah theologian, d. AH150/767CE. He argued against the proposition that there is no intermediate position between the believer and the unbeliever.

Yazid bin Madh'ur[1798] says: "I saw Awza'i[1799] in a dream. I said: 'Inform me of a deed which is better so that I may draw closer to it.'' He said: 'I have seen no degree higher than the degree of the learned. Surpassing those, is the degree of the sorrowful.'" This Yazid was an old man. After that, he always wept until he received the command and his eyes darkened. Ibn 'Uyaynah[1800] says: "I saw a brother in a dream. I asked: 'What has God done with thee?' He answered: 'He forgave all the sins for which I asked forgiveness, but he did not forgive those for which I did not ask forgiveness.'"

Zubaydah[1801] was seen in a dream. She was asked: "What has God done with thee?' She answered: "He has been merciful." She was asked: "Because of the wealth thou didst spend on the road to Makkah?" She said: "No, for the reward for that went to its lord.[1802] He forgave me because of my intention."

Sufyan Thawri was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "I placed one foot on the bridge (over hell) and the other in Paradise." Ahmad bin (Abi) al-Hawari[1803] says: "I saw my wife in a dream with a beauty I had never seen. Her face was radiant with light. I asked: 'What is this light on thy face?' She said: 'Dost thou remember that on such-and-such a night thou didst remember God Most High and wept?' I said: 'Yes.' She said: 'I rubbed thy tears on my face. All of this radiance is from that."

Kattani[1804] says: "I saw Junayd in a dream. I asked: 'What has God done with thee?' He said: 'All of those acts of worship and instructions were nothing. They were blown away by the wind and resulted in nothing, except for the two-bow formal prayer I would perform at night.'

Zubaydah was seen in a dream. She was asked: "What has God done with thee?" She answered: "God has had mercy upon me for these four utterances that I used to say: *Finish my life with 'There is no god but God'; enter (me) in my grave with 'There is no god but God'; leave me*

[1798] Yazīd bin Madh'ūr: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1799] Awzā'ī: Abū 'Amr 'Abd al-Rahmān bin 'Amr, born at Baalbek (Lebanon) AH129-30/747CE, he died at Beirut AH157/773-4CE. An important jurisprudent, he is mentioned in Fihrist, Qushayri, etc.

[1800] Ibn 'Uyaynah: See Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah, Note 990.

[1801] Zubaydah: the wife of Harun al-Rashid (see Note 1007). The daughter of Ja'far, she is famous for her love of finery and culture as well as her donations to religious establishments. She died AH216/831CE.

[1802] That is, the reward for the money spent went to him whose money it was. As usual, Ghazzali is impugning the lawfulness of the money of rulers, suggesting that the money was not hers to spend, but God rewarded her for her intention.

[1803] Aḥmad bin Abī al-Ḥawārī: see Note 566.

[1804] Kattani: Abu Bakr Kattani: see Note 855.

alone with 'There is no god but God'; and make me meet my Lord with 'There is no god but God.'"

Bishr was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He replied: "He has been merciful and said to me: 'Hadst thou no shame before Me that thou didst fear Me so harshly?'" Abu Sulayman was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "He was merciful and did not make it a loss for me that this people pointed at me; that is, that I was famous among the religious."

Abu Sa'id Kharraz[1805] says: "I saw Iblis in a dream, I took up a cudgel to strike him, but he had no fear and was not afraid. An unseen voice called: 'He does not fear that; he fears the light that is in the soul.'" Masuhi[1806] says: "I saw Iblis in a dream naked. I said: 'Art thou not ashamed before men?' He said: 'They are not men. If they were men, I would not play with them as a child plays with a ball. Men are a different group, who make me ill and emaciated.' He was referring to the Sufis." Abu Sa'id Kharraz says: "I was in Damascus when I saw the Messenger (S) in a dream, coming and leaning on Abu Bakr and 'Umar, may God be pleased with them. I was reciting a verse of poetry and striking my finger on my breast.[1807] He said: 'The evil of that is greater than its good.'"

Shibli was seen in a dream three days after his death. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "He was strict in the accounting with me so that I despaired. When He saw my despair, He had mercy upon me." Sufyan Thawri was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "He was merciful." He was asked: "What is the condition of 'Abdullah Mubarak?"[1808] He said: "Every day he is twice granted an audience to see God Most High."

Malik bin Anas was seen in a dream: He was asked: "What has God Most High done with thee?" He replied: "He was merciful with a word that I had heard from 'Uthman bin 'Affan which he would say when he saw a bier: '*Glory be to the Living One Who does not die!*'" On the night that Hasan Basri received the command, he was seen in a dream, the gates of the heavens were flung open and a herald was crying: "Hasan Basri has seen God and He was pleased with him."

Junayd saw Iblis naked in a dream. (Junayd) asked: "Hast thou not shame before people?" He answered: "These are not people. People

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[1805] Abu Sa'id Kharraz: Abū Saʿīd Aḥmad bin ʿĪsā al-Kharrāz, an ascetic of Baghdad who was accused of heresy. He fled first to Bukhara, then Egypt. Hujwiri says he was the first to define *fanā* (self-annihilation in God), though others attribute this to Bayazid (see Note 1327). He died AH286/899CE. (Bagley)

[1806] Masūḥi: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

[1807] He was singing the verse and striking his finger on his breast in time with that.

[1808] 'Abdullah Mubarak: See Ibn al-Mubarak (Note 660).

are those who are in the Shuniziyah Mosque[1809] who keep me tormented and lean." He said: "In the morning, I went to the Mosque of Shuniziyah. When I entered, I saw (the people) in meditation, heads placed upon their knees. They said: 'Be not deceived by the words of that accursed defiled one.'"

'Utbah al-Ghulam saw of one of the fair ones of Paradise in a very splendid form. She said: "O 'Utbah, I am in love with thee. Beware! Do not do anything that will keep me from thee!" 'Utbah said: "I shall divorce the world thrice and not hang about it so that I may reach thee." Abu Ayyub Sijistani saw the bier of a corrupt man. He went up to a high place so as not to perform the (funeral) prayer for him. That dead man was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He replied: "He had mercy upon me and said that thou shouldst tell Ayyub: *Say: If ye possessed the treasuries of the mercy of my Lord, ye would surely hold them back for fear of spending!*" (Q. 17:100) That is: "If the treasures of the mercy of God were in thy hands, thou wouldst not spend of them out of miserliness."

The night that Dawud Tayi received the command, someone saw in a dream that the angels of heaven were coming and going. He said: "What night is this?" They said: "Tonight Dawud Tayi has received the command and the heavens are being decorated for him." Abu Sa'id Shahham[1810] says: "I saw Sahl Su'luki[1811] in a dream. I said: 'O master!' He said: 'Leave the mastership, for that has departed.' I asked: 'What have all of thy deeds and acts gotten?' He said: 'They had no benefit, except (my) answering the questions that old women would ask.'"

Rabi' bin Sulayman relates that Shafi'i, may God have mercy upon him, says: "A difficult matter came before me that has me perplexed. In a dream, I saw some who came and said: 'O Muhammad bin Idris, say: *O God, I do not control for myself profit, nor loss, nor death, nor life, nor the Resurrection. I am not able to take except that which Thou givest me. I cannot protect myself from anything save from that which Thou protectest me. O God make me favored and successful for that which Thou dost love and approve of good words and deeds.*' When I arose in the morning, I offered that supplication. That problem became easy (for me) in the forenoon. Thou must not forget that supplication."

Someone says: "I saw 'Utbah al-Ghulam in a dream. I asked: 'What has God done with thee?' He replied: 'He has forgiven (me) for that supplication written on the wall in thy house. When I woke up, I

[1809] The Shūnīziyah Mosque was a well-known mosque in Abbasid Baghdad.

[1810] Abū Sa'īd Shahhām: Qushayri (b. AH376/989CE, d. AH465/1072CE), saying that he heard it from Abu Sa'id himself, records the same anecdote in a somewhat fuller version.

[1811] Sahl Su'luki: Abū al-Tayyib Sahl bin Muḥammad bin Mūsā bin 'Īsā bin Ibrāhim Su'lūkī, died AH404/1013CE. A Sufi master.

looked and saw the writing of 'Utbah al-Ghulam: '*O Guide of those who have strayed, O Giver of mercy to sinners, O Overlooker of the lapses of those who slip! Have mercy upon Thy servant who is in great danger and upon the Muslims all of them together. Place us with the living who enjoy (Thy) sustenance, those whom Thou hast favored of the prophets and the truly righteous and the martyrs and the doers of good. Amen, O Lord of the worlds!*'"

Let this much that has been related about death suffice. We finish this book upon this and we hope that whoever reads this book and who derives benefit from it will not forget to supplicate on behalf of the author of the book and to ask God Most High to pardon and forgive him so that if any error, lapse, or defect has found its way into the discourse, or if any dissimulation or hypocrisy has become mixed with the intention, God Most High, with His favor and generosity and the blessings of their supplications, may overlook them, and this book may not be without a portion of spiritual reward. For, there is no fraud greater than this, that a person invite the people to God and then, because of a regard for the people, be veiled from God Most High. *We seek refuge with God from that. Then we say at the conclusion of the book:*

O God, surely we seek refuge with Thy pardon from Thy punishment; we seek refuge with Thine approval from Thy displeasure; we seek refuge with Thee from Thee. Innumerable are Thy praises. Thou art as Thou hast praised Thyself. Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds; blessings upon Muhammad and his good and pure family.

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This is not a bibliography devoted to Ghazzali and his works but rather to the sources use in preparing this translation. Neither is it an exhaustive list of all the books I have consulted in preparing this translation and the notes, but it does give the chief ones. When a work is noted (usually by the abbreviation at the end of the bibliographical reference) at the end of a footnote between parentheses, it indicates that it was the principal source for the note, although works may have been consulted.

For the translation itself, in addition to the basic texts edited by HK and AA, I have consulted standard references (cited by the abbreviated names used in the list below at the end of the entry) including the dictionaries of Steingass, Aryanpour, Mu'in, Hughes, Nadwi; translations of the Holy Quran by Pickthall, Yusuf Ali, Muhammad Ali, Arberry, etc., and the Holy Bible (King James and Revised Standard versions).

Resources consulted for the general and biographical footnotes include: Fihrist (invaluable for its biographical notes in addition to the intrinsic worth of the text), EI, SEI, IKh, Bosworth, Bukhari, Hughes, 'Attar, Hujwiri, Lata'if, AIH, HOH, Khalid, Sirah, Ibn Ishaq, Hussain, Tabaqat, CIH, Rahman, and Qushayri.

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